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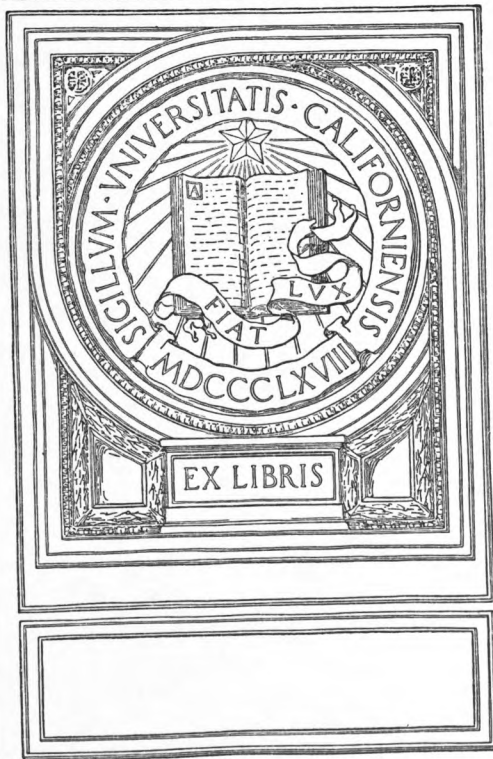
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*Sketches of life and
sport in South-Eastern Africa*

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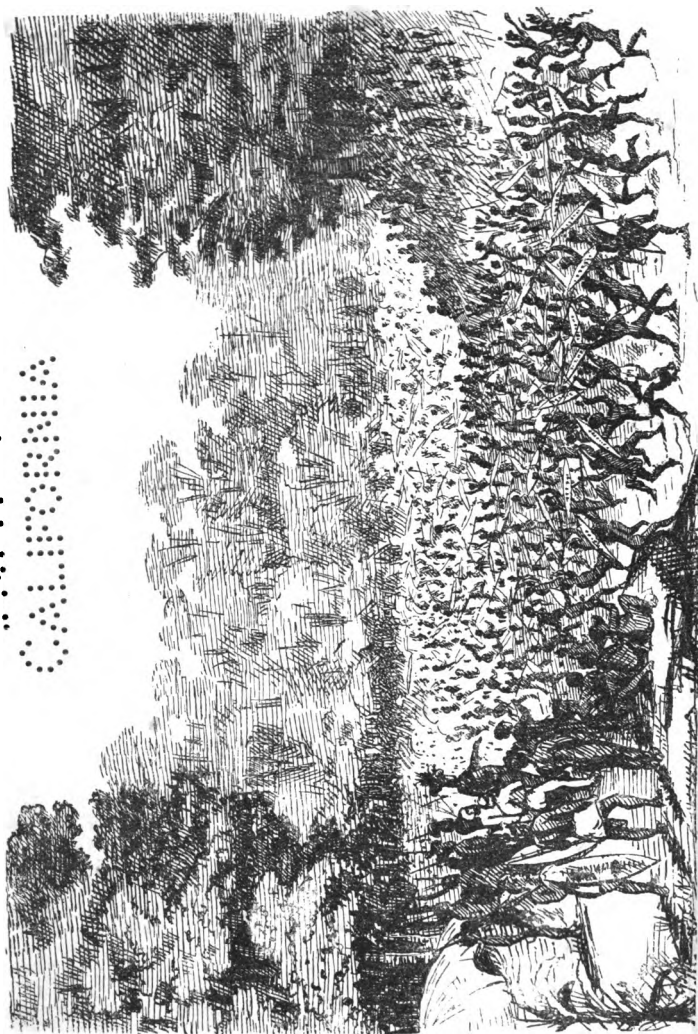
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**SKETCHES OF LIFE AND SPORT IN
SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA.**

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SKETCHES OF LIFE AND SPORT 3

IN

SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA.

BY

CHARLES HAMILTON, F.A.S.L.

EDITED BY

F. G. H. PRICE, F.R.G.S., F.A.S.L.

ILLUSTRATED BY PIERRE MÉJANEL.

LONDON :

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

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PREFACE.

As Editor of this little work, I desire to say a few words in my preface, stating how such a volume happens to be laid before the public.

Mr. Charles Hamilton had, upon many occasions, narrated to me his personal intercourse with, and observations upon, the Kaffirs during his wanderings in South-Eastern Africa. This greatly interested me, as the course he took was different to that commonly pursued by Europeans, who keep as much as possible to the beaten track, and make towns their headquarters.

Our author became a Kaffir for the time being, and lived with the natives for many months. He entered

into their pursuits, and threw off all European dress, satisfied to be clothed with the skin of a leopard, or of any other animal, as shown in the frontispiece.

His adventures appeared so original that many of his friends, myself among the number, requested him to work up his notes and publish them, as they were likely to prove of great interest to the public, and serviceable to those wishing to settle in the colony of Natal.

Mr. Hamilton, however, declined to accede to our request, but he authorized me to take notes of his adventures, and gave me a full *viva voce* explanation of his travels. I have thus been enabled to lay before the reader the facts and incidents of his life among the Kaffirs.

I trust that any errors in the orthography of Zulu names will be leniently passed over, as I had to write most of them from sound; Mr. Hamilton being only acquainted with the language through constant intercourse with the natives, and not from the actual study of it. I have, however, had reference to an English-

Zulu dictionary, that was kindly lent me by the Anthropological Society of London, which renders it approximately correct.

My thanks are due to the Rev. Charles Carlos Clarke for his valuable assistance rendered me in this work, and for his careful revision and enlargement of the original notes which were entrusted to him.

F. G. H. PRICE.

LONDON, *January*, 1870.

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SKETCHES OF LIFE AND SPORT IN SOUTH-EASTERN AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at D'Urban.—Waggon.—Hottentot Driver.—*En route* for Pietermaritzburg.—Night Attack.—Description of Kaffirs.—Their great Speed.—Hair-cutting.—Kaffir Costume.—Snuffing.—Disaster with our Oxen.—Game.—Scenery and Fertility of the Soil.—A Kraal Mode of Cooking.—Arrival at Pinetown.

IN the latter end of the year of 1863, I determined upon making my way to the south-eastern coast of Africa. My first object was, by personal inspection to verify the accounts which have been published of our colonies in that part of the world, and to guide and instruct others who, like myself, may be induced to look for amusement or sport in little-cultivated regions. My second, to ascertain, in the interests of enterprising travellers, the amount of convenience or the reverse with which such a journey could be undertaken. I had been assured that my labours would not be thrown away, if I sought only amusement; for that the wide difference between the most civilised phases of African

life and anything I had seen in my own country could not be imagined; and I left home with a full determination not to be deterred by fear of fatigue or prospect of danger. I have been so far and so well repaid for my labour, that I wait somewhat impatiently for further opportunities of pursuing my investigations.

I was not bound to the most inviting part of the South African coast, nor expecting the repose which Capetown and its society offers after the confinement and inconveniences of a voyage. I had started with the intention (if not the object) of "roughing it;" a process which varies very materially with the part of the world in which it is practised. I have heard of "roughing it" in Ireland and in Scotland upon loch and moorland, in a comfortable cottage, unadorned by Turkey carpets, and where butchers' meat was not procurable above five days in the week; where grouse and salmon was all that could be got to eat, and that washed down with claret so much the worse for its four hundred miles journey, that occasional whiskey and water had to be substituted for it. The "roughing it" for which I was prepared was such that, if I enjoyed an advantage in climate over the perpetual rains of the one and the impenetrable mists of the other, the butchers' meat and the grouse were considerably more exceptional, and the use of knives and forks at all equally doubtful with what they were likely to be employed upon.

I knew something of the country to which I was

going; not indeed accurately, but with that sort of general knowledge which belongs to men more anxious to ascertain something for themselves than dependent upon others' labours for information. I had heard of Mocaranga and Zanzibar, of the River Quilimane, and of Mozambique; of mixed populations of Negroes, Hottentots, and Arabs; of Kaffirs and Koussis (which is only another name for these powerful people); and, above all, of occasional leopards, lions, wolves, rhinoceroses, jackals, springbucks, and black eagles, which held out to me a far greater inducement than the descendants of the Dutch and Portuguese, or intercourse with our own enterprising colonists. I was bound for the country which extends inland from Natal.

Between the Cape of Good Hope and the states which form the country or empire of Mocaranga, or Monomotapa, there is a vast extent of country not yet explored, belonging to various tribes of savages, probably of one race and language, governed independently by separate chiefs, and not, strictly speaking, either Negroes or Hottentots. The extreme south-east of this tract of country is Natal, a British colony, and so called, as is reported, from the fact of the Portuguese having visited this coast on Christmas Day. The traffic in the teeth of the hippopotamus is said to be very extensive at this port, and proves a highly commercial spirit in the natives; traffic at all in the teeth of such a beast showing an indomitable disregard of obstacles.

Natal is bounded on the south-west by the river Umtumfuna, on the north-east by the River Tugela, on the north-west by the Quathlamba or Drakenberg Mountains, and on the south-east by the Indian Ocean. This colony lies between $29^{\circ} 20'$ and 31° south latitude, and in $31^{\circ} 25'$ east longitude; covering altogether an area of 20,000 square miles; and in 1867 contained a population of 263,000, of which 250,000 were natives. It has the reputation of being particularly healthy, as it is free from many virulent diseases which affect our own climate. There is, however, one prevalent disorder, so far as I know, peculiar to it, called the Zulu fever; which is a kind of ague, and not of a very severe character. It appears to be dependent entirely upon atmospheric influences.

The average temperature of this climate along the coast during the summer months is about 75° Fahrenheit, although it has been known to considerably exceed this. It is, however, very much cooler in the mountain districts; and in winter the temperature seldom falls below 62° or 63° Fahrenheit. The rainy season generally begins in March and ends in September.

In January, 1864, I reached the well-known town of D'Urban, which is the only seaport in Natal. It is situated in a bay in $29^{\circ} 56'$ south latitude and $30^{\circ} 43'$ east longitude, and it forms a good harbour for ships.

From this point my travels may be said to have commenced; and I shall now endeavour briefly to narrate,

with a few observations and personal experience of every-day life, the results of my wanderings. May they at some future time prove useful to others travelling with the same object and the same resources as myself, or serve as an amusement to those who have neither time nor inclination to leave the beaten track.

I may as well state at once my impressions of the facilities of travel in some of these regions. Obstacles there are, though not impossibilities, to be overcome. People desiring comfort and luxury I should therefore recommend not to visit this country, as neither one nor the other can possibly be obtained; but they who seek adventure, and who are not frightened by personal intercourse with a very extraordinary, though semi-barbarous, race, could not do better than make an expedition to South Africa.

D'Urban being a most uninteresting town, I remained but one night. A fellow-countryman, whose acquaintance I made during our passage across, volunteered to join me for a short time, to which proposal I gladly acceded; for the most enthusiastic feels some compunction at quitting civilised life; and only those who have experienced it know the lonely, desolate feeling of first setting foot in a foreign land without guidance or sympathy.

The first thing, next morning, after taking a general survey of the place and its inhabitants, was to find a means of transit to the interior, and my companion with myself went to seek a waggon, which was readily

obtained, this being the only mode of travelling, or "trekking," as it is here called. This conveyance costs about £100 sterling to buy, so we only hired it. The wheels are made of the famous Natal wood called "umsimbiti," or iron-wood, from its strength and durability. It sometimes is polished so highly as to look even brighter than steel; and it amazed me to see how this wood could be worked to such perfection. The truck, or body, is composed of "umkoba," or yellow-wood, which is likewise of a hard, durable nature, and stands the climate well. The top is formed of arched laths of a lighter description of wood, covered with a rough, coarse canvass; under this hammocks are strung up; for it is necessary either to sleep in the open air, or avail yourself of one of these hanging beds. They are not, under the circumstances of the case, at all uncomfortable; and while the waggon is in motion, give a dreamy, soothing sensation to an otherwise rough pillow. I do not mean that they are as pleasant as a hammock on board-ship—one of the most luxurious beds a man can get into; enough indeed to

"Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the vast imperious surge."

But it is a cradle not to be despised over a South African highway, and a worse compromise might be made by a traveller than for a night's rest in the slings of a "trekking" waggon while camping out on expeditions of pleasure or of sport.

The roads or passes usually are of the roughest description, as may easily be supposed; sometimes with ruts so deep as entirely to cover up the smaller wheels, it is therefore necessary to have a substantially-built conveyance, and not to be particular about the springs. The vehicle is naturally of great weight: indeed, some idea may be formed of this, when I refer to the fact that it took sixteen oxen to draw it, and another span was driven behind by some Kaffirs to serve as a relay for the morrow. The drag is so great upon these unfortunate animals, they can only work every alternate day.

Our coachman was a Hottentot, who was perched upon a high sort of shelf in front of the waggon; and if Mr. Peters would have been astonished at the carriage, Captain Bastard would have been equally surprised at the driver. A small seat served for this man, as he wore little or no clothing, judged by our standard of fashion or comfort. He had a fur cap upon his head, two-thirds of a cloak thrown over one shoulder, much tattered and in large holes, and two leather aprons, likewise in shreds. The one was worn in front, and the other behind. They were fastened round his waist by numberless straps, intermixed with beads of every description. It was a *dégagée* sort of toilet, and looked inexpensive. The man himself was excessively ugly; and would have borne a little more clothing without detriment to his personal appearance; but he was not black, merely of a very

dark and sallow complexion. He did not condescend to drive the oxen, as we understand the word, with reins. A small boy ran in front of the first two, which he guided to the best of his ability, and the driver kept the rest of the animals well up to their work by constantly cracking his whip. These whips are made of rhinoceros hide, and long enough to reach even the sixteenth ox ; it is so cutting as often to make open gashes in the flesh as though a knife had been used. No one could govern this unwieldy whip excepting a Hottentot ; and a French or German postillion would have dropped out of his boots with envy at the noise, to say nothing of the execution.

In this manner we “trekked” for Pietermaritzburg. The usual distance travelled in a day is about twenty miles ; we only accomplished twelve, in consequence of a Dutchman, who acted as our servant (a luxury I allowed myself out of compliment to declining civilisation), foreboding a heavy storm. We thought it most expedient to take his warning, and to look for shelter at the first hostelry. Fortunately there were not many steps to go before coming to one. It was certainly more like a barn or shed than inn ; however, “any port in a storm—even *South African*,” said we. At the best of times, we were not over particular ; and we had no cause to regret our determination on beholding the cheerful smiling countenance of the hostess, who, seeing Europeans, and, above all, Englishmen, approaching, presented herself at the door to give us a

hearty welcome. She was a Dutchwoman ; and her natural characteristic of cleanliness prevailed throughout the house, though everything was of the most rude and primitive description.

We were not without company, for three or four of her own countrymen were already being cared for by this woman in the house ; and we were not many minutes in their society before we entered into conversation and partook of a cheerful cup of tea together. It was served in a large gourd or calabash, with a wooden spout put in to represent a tea-pot, and all other articles upon the table had the same unpromising appearance.

The prediction of the Dutch servant was but too true ; for scarcely were we under shelter when the most violent storm of wind, thunder, and lightning began to rage that I ever witnessed. I shall not attempt here to describe it, as I was assured that I should have many future opportunities of witnessing the same natural phenomena in increased intensity. The Dutchmen were right, as the reader will see.

About ten o'clock the tempest lulled, but the rain continued in torrents ; notwithstanding which we returned to the waggon to pass our first night under canvass—a hazardous and, as it proved, unprofitable experiment ! Being excessively fatigued after our day's jolt, each one quickly got out his blanket, climbed into his hammock, and fell asleep. Not for long, however, was he allowed to enjoy this peaceful

repose. I suppose I might have been asleep some half-hour or more—I was barely in the land of dreams—when one of our party, not satisfied with having the sport entirely to himself, gave an alarm that somebody or something was endeavouring to effect an entrance by the canvass roof of the waggon. Not knowing the country, nor the nature of its inhabitants, nor its wild beasts, and being certainly impressed with the notion that the police were as much absent here as they are in Belgravia or St. Giles's when they are wanted, I aroused myself sufficiently to take part in the fray. I may be forgiven for my nervousness, which ranged in thought from a body of Kaffirs to a lion, upon the grounds that I did not then know how hospitable and humane are the former, and how difficult to be found are the latter. I sat up in bed; I rubbed my eyes, and felt for my arms. There could be no doubt about it. An attack by the roof was intended, but whether it was a savage or an animal I could not distinguish, nor could my friend, nor any one of the rest of the party. The canvass was no less agitated than we were. The beast or man was hanging over our heads, like the sword of Damocles, and I had just begun to wonder when it would fall, when my friend solved my doubts. It might have been a leopard, a tiger-cat, a Kaffir, or a missionary seeking shelter—*which* we did not stop to inquire; but assuming it to be the former, my friend drew forth his revolver and fired. The enemy died hard; but he did die; and after some struggles, which

we were unwilling or unable to witness from the blinding rain, he sunk to a longer sleep than we calculated on. It proved to be neither more nor less than a wild cat.

But if we had freed ourselves from one enemy, another assailed us through the same quarter. The rain came pouring down through the hole which my friend had made by his highly successful shot in our canvass roof. We were soaked through and through, wet to the skin as unconditionally as if we had been dragged through a river, and our clothes, that we had with us, were in some danger of being spoilt. This sounds like a great misfortune; but we were in a country where clothes are a luxury, not a necessity, and where no discredit attaches to a scanty wardrobe. But food is another matter; and a round of boiled beef, which we had kept for an emergency, was utterly ruined. We were unable to balance the lost beef by the tiger-cat.

This was my first night in real Kaffirland. The inconvenience of not being able to speak the Kaffir language was very great. They do not understand English, so that everything had to be expressed by signs, which they frequently would not comprehend; and as they are naturally indolent, we could not get them to work.

The Kaffirs inhabiting Natal and the neighbourhood are a remarkably fine race of men. Their skin is rather copper-coloured than black; their height is

usually from five feet ten inches to six feet three ; very muscular and graceful in all their movements, with an agility which is surprising. As an illustration of their speed of foot I shall relate the following fact :—I was upon a Cape horse, and put it to full gallop ; a Kaffir ran on either side, and, after a run of some miles, the horse began to blow. It is true that the horse was not in condition, and that the Kaffirs were ; which, indeed, makes all the difference ; still it says something for the power of endurance and pace of these men that the horse was obliged to be stopped from motives of humanity, and that the Kaffirs won their trial. As specimens of power and activity it would be difficult to beat them.

I may not in the course of this narrative have a better opportunity of describing the marked characteristics of this race ; and as their connection and relative intercourse with ourselves must of necessity increase, a few minutes devoted to their mere physical qualities and most obvious customs will not be thrown away.

The hair in both male and female is short, very crisp and coarse, sometimes inclined to be woolly, but not so woolly as that of the Negro ; the lips are thick ; the nose broad and flat. They wear very little clothing ; the married man wears merely an apron, composed of the tails of some native animals, strung together, and fastened round the loins. A ring, formed of clay, made very hard, is fixed upon the head so tightly that it can never be removed.

The ring is considered a mark of honour and distinction; "Indunas," or ministers of the chief, generally wear three or four. But previously to the fixing of any ring, the head must be shaved by a process which is not very agreeable. I speak from experience, having undergone it several times myself. A man, who acts as hair-dresser, places the customer's head between his knees, and, with a piece of glass in his hand, scrapes all the hair off. The operation gives the operator such intense satisfaction that he grinds his teeth, and indulges in such contortions as to remind the uninitiated of Hanwell and the pleasures of being shaved by a dangerous lunatic. The young man, or "boy," as he is termed, never puts on apparel of any description, or any ring on his head. For a war-dance, or festival, the men and boys adorn their heads with feathers, arranged with the utmost care, forming a most imposing head-dress.

Like the most civilised of ancient nations, they prepare a grease, which is made from the berry of the castor-oil plant. With this they rub themselves over every day, making their bodies shine like bright bronze. They are particularly partial to snuff, also a characteristic of the highest refinement; all the highest class men have a box, which is carried in the ear, by cutting a hole in it sufficiently large to admit the box or horn, as it happens to be. Their ears are always limp and mutilated, owing to the custom of making them a receptacle for little odds and ends.

There is a peculiar ceremony in snuffing. They seldom take it while standing, or even alone. Kaffirs, being of a sociable nature, prefer company; and, in order to indulge in this luxury without interruption, they sit, or rather squat, upon the ground; nor will they allow themselves to be disturbed when in the act of pushing it up their noses, which they literally do by means of an ivory spoon. Some use these snuff-spoons made of horn or wood, curiously carved and fashioned by themselves.

Having endeavoured thus far to describe the externals of the Kaffir, I will proceed with my narrative. To add to our misfortunes the oxen broke away; no joke in a wild country like this, where perhaps for fifty miles one would never meet with a human being. Two whole days were spent in searching for them; and had it not been for the assistance of the Kaffirs, we should never have recovered them. We, however, succeeded in our quest on the third day, and found that the animals had strayed as far as thirty miles from the waggon. We were greatly pleased at recovering them, and it happily proved a wholesome lesson to our men, as they were more attentive to their duty for the rest of the journey. We saw an immense quantity of game, including partridges, bustards, and other birds of which I did not know the nature. We devoted some time to shooting it, making very fair bags each day; and it was upon this that we principally subsisted, as we preferred it to "junk." The partridges

were similar to English ones ; the bustards gave good sport, and were excellent eating ; we likewise killed a large number of hawks and crows, which we did not eat.

The scenery of the country we traversed was most lovely ; undulating in hill and dale, and exquisitely wooded, and luxuriant with tropical growth. Here I first saw a beautiful plant, called the coralodendrum, or Kaffir boom, which struck us very much. It bore a flower of a deep red hue, in shape and colour similar to a large cactus. And some idea may be formed of the extreme fertility of the soil, by the fact that if a tract of grass be burnt up accidentally or by design, it will be covered in a few days' time with a carpet of the mosses, and most beautiful flowers, of the season. No ordinary description can give an idea of the luxuriance of vegetation ; and language fails when an attempt is made to convey any notion of the rapidity of floral growth in this country.

Scenes like these made me regret that I was no botanist, that I could carry back no specimens of all the splendid plants I here saw ; and though the opinion is a strong one, I believe the Brazils themselves to be less rich in a brilliant Flora than the country of which I am now writing.

It was in such a spot of natural beauties we halted, to make preparations for dinner, and to encamp for the night. A fire was soon kindled, and we proceeded a short distance to a Kaffir kraal, to purchase some fowls,

by way of variety, for we had had a surfeit of game since leaving D'Urban. Like my Scotch friends I had been "roughing it." But you will want to be told what a Kaffir kraal is like, and what are its uses. A kraal is a most remarkable sight; it is the home of a chief, with all his wives, children, servants, and cattle around him. The Kaffirs in some respects are like ourselves; but here is one instance of the reverse. When a man starts in life, he takes a wife, as a matter of course; why, it is impossible to say, excepting that it is as easy to support two, or half-a-dozen, as one. If poor, he can only afford one hut, but as his riches increase, he is able to add to the number of his huts, and marry more wives. It is the custom for a man, when he marries, to give the father of the girl twenty or more cows for his daughter. In fact, he buys her; and, I believe, if she does not come up to the warranty, she is returnable, as she should be. I have seen a great chief's kraal containing as many as forty or fifty huts, with a wife in each. They are always of a circular form (not the chiefs, nor the wives, but the huts), and generally built upon the side of a hill, where shelter is to be obtained from the wind. These habitations are very easy of construction, being without difficulty made in a day. It is an amusing sight to see a number of men and women at work, building one of them, chattering incessantly the whole time. They are calculated to stand almost any amount of weather. The men go into the forests, and cut boughs of young trees, which, owing

to the climate, grow very rapidly, and consequently are flexible. They then set to work, and strip off the leaves, fix these long sticks firmly in the ground, and arch them over, always adhering to the circle; these are supported by strong props or poles, upon which they rest; this framework is then covered with plaited grass or rushes, worked so tightly together that not even rain can penetrate it. They more resemble gigantic beehives than anything I can think of, having no window or chimney, but merely an opening on one side, which represents a door, only large enough to enable a man to crawl out on his hands and knees. At night when they sleep, a kind of wooden hurdle serves to fill up this place, to keep out poisonous snakes, and other reptiles, which infest this country. The floor is the bare earth, covered over with cow-dung, which is beaten down until it becomes as hard as stone. For a bed they merely lie upon a thin mat, made of grass, and rest their heads upon a log of wood as a pillow. Round each a trench is dug, to keep the hut as dry as possible. The size of them depends upon the rank or favour they are in with the chief, he, of course, occupying the best and middle one himself. And although the Kaffir has many good qualities, I scarcely think that disinterestedness can be numbered among them. The wives live in huts all round their husband, being built, according to custom, at the time of their marriage, by their respective brothers. His cattle are his great pride and happiness. All his wealth is numbered in his cows and goats; the

latter share the huts at night with the wives; the cows occupy a kraal to themselves; a high palisading encloses the whole.

Having purchased a couple of fowls, which we obtained in exchange for beads, I proceeded to cook them in the Kaffir style. First of all, I immersed them in scalding water; by this means I was enabled to strip the skin and feathers off together; I then went to an ant-heap, which was readily found, for there were many in the neighbourhood. I made a hole in it on a level with the ground, into which I put some sticks, and lit a fire. This soon made it almost red hot, and quite hard. I then knocked off the top, and placed the fowls on it, covered them over with a little loose mould, and in a very short time they were ready for eating. This impromptu meal was most heartily partaken of, and even more eaten than if it had been cooked in European fashion. Undoubtedly we had the best sauce served with it.

During the time dinner was being cooked, we repaired the torn canvass of the waggon, by patching it up with an old coat. The meal being ended, we proceeded to make ourselves comfortable for the night, after the following fashion. The Kaffirs in attendance piled up a large fire, and sang strange wild songs until eleven or twelve o'clock. What with their yelling, and the croaking noise of the toads, frogs, and lizards, which joined in this inharmonious chorus, it can easily be imagined that we unfortunate fresh arrivals never got

a wink of sleep that night. It requires considerable practice to sleep under the circumstances.

At day-break voices were heard, and upon looking out, we saw two men driving a span of oxen in a large waggon, whom, upon its approach, we addressed. We found they were two young Englishmen, bringing down a load of wool and skins from the Drakenberg Mountains to be shipped at D'Urban for England. They were so pleased to meet fellow-countrymen, and fresh arrivals from home, that they remained the whole day to hear our latest news.

The next day we proceeded on our journey, and by sun-down got within two days of Pietermaritzburg, having arrived at a place called Pinetown. This derives its name from Governor Pine, who was appointed in 1849. It is one of the prettiest townships in Natal, situated in a most lovely valley, the hills round being covered with vegetation of the most beautiful description. The inhabitants are for the most part Dutch, who keep very large quantities of cattle; and as I passed through this district, I heard that the *rinderpest* was very prevalent, causing immense havoc amongst the herds.

The country is of gradual ascent from the sea to the foot of the Drakenberg. We journeyed on, up hill and down dale. The scenery on some of these heights was magnificent, and the air so clear and rarefied, that when twenty miles away from Pietermaritzburg we could actually have believed the distance to have been but

half, so clearly was the outline of some buildings defined. But when we got within seven miles, it was entirely lost to view, owing to the circuitousness of the roads. Still we felt we were nearing a town, and all became elated at the prospect of renewed comfort, as it was the first large one we had seen since leaving old England.

The environs through which we passed were most picturesque, many of the houses or villas, as they may be termed, being built in the Swiss style of architecture, and the river Umsunduze gracefully threading its course through the landscape.

CHAPTER II.

Pietermaritzburg.—Chief Goza and the Nakedness of the Land.—
Fashionable Promenade.—Bishopstowe.—Kaffir School.—Gaol.—
Flogging.—Kaffir Postmen and Messengers.—Assagais.—Kaffir
Town Boys.

PIETERMARITZBURG derives its name from two most distinguished Dutch boers, viz., Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz ; and “burg,” it is scarcely necessary to add, signifies in Dutch “a borough.” This town was founded by them in the year 1840, and is distant fifty miles W.N.W. of D’Urban.

I was glad to be on such good roads as those between Pietermaritzburg and D’Urban ; it is one of those advantages of civilisation that appeals almost incessantly to the traveller, whose first object is speedy locomotion. Eating, drinking, sleeping, even are accidents of his condition ; and as long as he has enough of them the wayfarer has but little right to grumble. But to be hung up in a country ; to be prevented from following up the only, or certainly the main, object with which you have involved yourself in the intricacies of foreign, or perhaps savage, life, is a nuisance. If a traveller cannot move, he is nothing.

He is a gourmand without victuals; a toper without drink; a sluggard without a bed; and, in opening up a new country, the want of ordinary roads, or means of locomotion, are the obstacles which present themselves most unfavourably to the stranger. As it is by Kaffir convict labour that they are kept in repair, we have something for which to be grateful even to crime; and it is something to know that the outrages upon property, life, decency and other sentiments belonging to civilisation, are made available for recouping society by the care of one of its greatest social necessities.

This is the chief town of the colony. Here resides the Lieutenant-Governor, who is assisted by the following officers:—an Attorney-General, an Auditor-General, a Collector of Customs, a Surveyor-General, a Crown Prosecutor, and a Government Secretary. These form a legislative and executive council. The revenue is derived from a customs' duty of 5 per cent. on all British goods, and 12 per cent. upon all foreign goods imported; there is likewise a capitation tax of five shillings on the Kaffirs resident in the colony. This tax is collected by a Government collector, who is sent out once a year for the purpose. It is frequently, indeed usually, a magistrate who goes out upon this unpleasant duty. He is attended by the native police; an active body of men, and not thrown away upon their business. Perhaps the fact that this somewhat stringent and partial tax is paid quietly, and with outward good-will, may prove the value of their

services. It reminds me, inexperienced in the *rationale* of such matters, of the mode of collecting black mail in Scotland, or alms in certain districts in Tipperary, where the form is simple, but, accompanied by a bludgeon, effective. "No compulsion, only ye must."

At the entrance to the town we crossed a handsome iron bridge, the banks on either side of the river below being planted with willows imported from England. They grow much more luxuriantly here than they do in their native country, and are objects of great admiration to the Kaffirs. Canaries, which were originally imported to us from the western coast of Africa, have selected these trees for building their nests, which they make of an oval shape, and ingeniously hang at the extreme ends of the branches, at a very short distance from the water, in order to protect themselves and their young from the jaws of snakes and lizards.

An old colonist, on his return to England, after a long residence here, sent out three swans, birds previously quite unknown in this country. However, they appear to thrive, and were expecting young; they also add much to the European aspect that the River Umsunduze presents upon entering Pietermaritzburg across the Victoria Bridge. On this bridge may be witnessed a very extraordinary scene; and the suggestion, with whomsoever it emanated, points to a spirit of enterprise, which is worthy of imitation in an age when appearance is everything. An old man sits on the bridge, and earns a respectable livelihood by letting,

not selling, old trousers and other garments to the Kaffirs at moderate charge. The Natal law prohibits the natives from appearing *in puris naturalibus*. Every man who crosses the bridge must be at least decently clothed. But as a Kaffir's decency on one side of the bridge centres in real innocence of mind, and on the other in breeches and a cocked 'hat, it was not unwise to make as much money out of his forced delicacy as possible. At any rate, the laws of Natal were obtained on each side of the bridge, for as he came out of the town he usually left his clothes behind him, and walked into the country as naked as "he was born." The matter was not improved by the appearance of a man six feet three inches high, fitted with the very loose and somewhat ragged breeches of a Dutch boer of four feet six inches, and as round as he was high.

I remember one day meeting the great chief Goza, attired in a most anti-regal costume; one of his legs was clothed in bright red cloth, and the other in a piece of bed-ticking, tied round his waist to represent trousers; some large banana leaves pinned together formed a loose, cool jacket; and upon his head he wore a very dilapidated old straw bonnet, reversed; this dress had the most ludicrous effect, and there could be no sort of doubt, from his manner, that he fancied himself one of the greatest men in the colony. The clothing of the married women, like the absence of the bishops in the House of Lords on the Irish Church Bill, is conspicuous by its absence, as they positively

refuse to wear anything but the bullock's hide, which forms a short skirt.

This town has some fine broad streets, particularly one called Longmarket Street, at the end of which is the Governor's residence. Here is the promenade, where all the notabilities disport themselves after four o'clock in the day, when it has become cool and pleasant. A military band plays twice a week, which attracts a large and fashionable assembly. The Bishop Colenso has a commodious, handsome residence, called "Bishopstowe," with grounds well and tastefully laid out, about four miles from the town.

There is a Kaffir school for boys and girls. I once visited this institution; the costume of the girls struck me as being exceedingly ludicrous, they wore no shoes nor stockings, merely a necklace and an outrageously large skeleton crinoline without any covering over it. With this amount of clothing they considered themselves full dressed. As a caution to those who may be philanthropic enough to visit this building, I recommend them to think twice before attempting it. Godliness and cleanliness are not so near akin among these children as they are said to be among the scholars of more civilised people.

The chiefs do not approve of this institution; for when once a girl leaves the kraal and enters it, or, in fact, goes to reside in any town, she is never permitted to return to the home of her youth—a thing not altogether to her disadvantage.

There is a race-course, and the racing is excellent; the settlers take great interest in it. The Alexandra Park, named out of compliment to H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, is not properly kept up. The gaol is worthy of mention; here they have a Hottentot "Calcraft." Kaffirs hold the Hottentots in great contempt, and feel the punishment administered by them more keenly than they would do, were it inflicted by an European; a not injudicious method of diminishing crime, by adding disgrace to the pain of corporeal chastisement.

I saw a man punished for insulting a white woman; he was sentenced to transportation for life, and to receive fifty lashes, which were to be laid on by the Hottentot. The chief of the tribe to which this man belonged was much grieved at the disgrace, and asked permission of the authorities to be allowed to address him. This was granted, and the chief entreated of him not to flinch or to utter a sound, as it was ignominious enough to bring dishonour on himself by being flogged by a Hottentot, without debasing his kraal. The man carried out his chief's instructions to the letter; and so great is the Kaffir's self-control, that when he had received ten lashes the Governor really thought that life was extinct. As he had not moved a muscle, it was necessary to listen to ascertain whether his heart was still beating.

Kaffir postmen are employed to carry the mails from Pietermaritzburg to D'Urban, which are delivered with punctuality. These men do not burden them-

selves with any clothing, and they run the whole distance, carrying an assagai in one hand, with which they would attack any one should an impediment arise to arrest their progress.* On approaching the towns they put on a pair of old breeches, which are kept by them at their respective houses of call for that purpose.

When a person desires to send a message to another residing a long distance off, a special messenger is hired, who carries the letter at the top of a stick, by putting it into a slit made at the end; this he holds well over his head, and, like the postman, runs the whole distance, sometimes fifty and sixty miles, for the fee of five shillings. Nothing induces these messengers to loiter on the road except the offer of a spoon of snuff by a friend, which temptation the Kaffir never can resist; for it not only means snuffing, but news; and they are as fond of gossip as any old ladies of Bath or Cheltenham over their tea and muffins.

The inhabitants consist chiefly of English and Dutch, and almost invariably of Kaffir servants.

The Kaffir boys employed in the town are fed upon ground mealies made into porridge, with plenty of salt; this is boiled in a large pot standing upon three legs. Each master allows his servant a certain quantity of

* The assagai is a weapon without which a Kaffir is seldom seen. It is a kind of spear, made of light wood taken from a tree bearing the same name, at the end of which a rude iron blade is fixed. It is so curved as to inflict a deadly wound, and is used by the natives with great dexterity, and sometimes with fatal effects.

mealy every morning, and it is their custom to club together to devour it. They squat all round the pot, and ladle it out with large wooden spoons into their mouths. It struck me that their tongues were unusually long, for they seemed to go all round the spoon. This is where the great palaver goes on, and each one narrates the scandals of his respective household. There is little need of newspapers for local news ; and I once heard tell of an old maiden lady who actually paid her boy higher wages in order to have the earliest intelligence of her neighbours' affairs.

The natives look upon the military at Fort Napier with great awe and admiration, more especially the artillery, when they are practising with heavy guns. This appears to terrify them even more than a thunder-storm. It has the effect of keeping this excitable race impressed with our powers, an advantage which cannot be too highly appreciated.

CHAPTER III.

Horse-breeding in Pietermaritzburg.—Richmond.—Hunting.—Pig-killing.—Accident to a Waggon-load of Beer.—Visit from a Chief.—War Dance.

I AM not likely to find a better opportunity of mentioning a subject of great importance in connection with Pietermaritzburg. At the time that I was in the country it had not attained any proportions, but had been merely mentioned as one of the elements of possible or probable success. Since that time the subject of horse-breeding in Natal has taken a distinct and palpable form. Several English horses have been imported, and attempts, successful or not, have been made to render Natal a market for Indian remounts.

So characteristic has this traffic or speculation become of Natal, that it would not be just to the colony to omit all mention of what has been done. It was but natural that English colonists should have turned their attention and invested their capital in so fascinating a pursuit as the breeding of horses. Two questions, however, were involved in this—the first, as to the capability of the colony itself; the second, as to the marketable nature of the commodity.

Now the question of capability in the colony to support them seems answered by an article in *Baily's Magazine*, of August, 1867. A well-known writer on such subjects, known as the "Gentleman in Black," has evidently taken great pains to collect all possible information on the subject; and as he has gone to the best sources, he has been successful in arriving at clear results. This gentleman is an English novelist; and it says something for the pains he has taken to arrive at the truth, when it is asserted in the colony that his knowledge of the subject can only be derived from long and intimate personal acquaintance with the colony and India. He suggests India as the market to which the colonial breeder must eventually look; and as the remounts in that country for cavalry are not well supplied, it certainly seems feasible that, if the means of transit are forthcoming, one of prosperity, or at all events, some return for outlay, will be secured. My knowledge of the subject, from experience, is of course limited; as, during my visit to the country, but little had been done or was doing; but so warmly has it been taken up since that time, that I shall not apologise to any but the writer for inserting in this place what may be to some an already thrice-told tale.

Extract from BAILY'S MAGAZINE, by the "Gentleman in Black."

"Natal, on the south-east coast of Africa, has been found, amongst other things, to be well calculated in

certain parts for the breeding of horses; and the native breed is larger and far better than that of the Cape. Enterprising Englishmen are to be found everywhere, but if one thing has a greater attraction for them than another, it is an occupation connected with horses. It seems to be an established axiom that of servants none rank higher than those to whose care is committed the noble animal, and certainly none can give themselves greater airs; while in any rank above that of absolute service are to be found men who forget position, previous education, and the adventitious circumstances of birth, in the pleasure and prestige of horse-farming of any description. There is no doubt that gentlemen who have failed to make money in other ways, or have managed to spend it, need feel under no apprehension as to caste should they undertake any enterprise connected with stable-management, or with the training or the breeding of horses. In addition, therefore, to the sheep and cattle, which originally were the natural occupations of colonists and settlers, within the last few years Natal has witnessed a great increase in the breed of her horses. By judicious crosses with other breeds, and again, with this produce and our own, some of the settlers have produced an excellent class of well-bred, useful horse. The colony has been stocked mainly through our English thorough-bred horse, of which several have been sent out, and for which prizes have been awarded at several times. The hills are especi-

ally favourable to this sort of stock, and as keep is very plentiful, labour cheap, and the distance from Pietermaritzburg to the port not more than fifty miles, it is reasonable to believe that it requires nothing but encouragement to make the hill district around this place a great horse-producing country. The success up to the present time has been great, and the prices, remunerative as I am informed, will make the gentlemen who give two thousand five hundred for a yearling open their eyes. But property is only valuable as it commands a sale. The best iron, without coal and transport, is comparatively dross, and so it is with the horses of Pietermaritzburg. At present they have no market, no coals, or in other words, steam transport to places where they would be valuable, in none more so than in India. Of course these colts and fillies are not bred for sale to the inhabitants. What market is there afforded, independently of being limited, is unsatisfactory. As elsewhere, the commercial crisis at Natal has not been all *couleur de rose*, money has been tight, and the ordinary exchange for a slashing colt, by Naughty Boy, has been in cows, or wool, or mutton, or bedsteads, garden-tools, and agricultural implements, to say nothing of bills at three months, renewable to all eternity, and payable on the Greek kalends.

“Now, strange as it may appear, this sort of exchange does not give sufficient encouragement to speculation in horse-flesh. Men who live in Natal are not

different from their fellow-creatures, and prefer money to tent-pegs when they can get it, and, from what I can make out, their wants are few and reasonable.

“They want a market; they want buyers for their young stock, with money in the mouth of their sacks to pay for it. That market is procurable in India; for, as I have already said, on almost universal authority, the Remount Commission stands in need of horses, and the settlers in Natal have the article, of varied excellence, but undoubtedly a very large half of the loaf in request. But Bombay and Madras are some distance from Natal, possibly three weeks’ or a month’s voyage, and, therefore, the colonists want the power of transport before they can reach their market, and, unhappily, they are not wealthy enough to undertake this. When the mountain would not go to Mahomet, Mahomet went to the mountain, and this must be the case now if there be sufficient enterprise in this country to bring Mahomet and the mountain together.

“If it can be shown that the thing will pay, there are seldom wanting those who are willing to profit by the opportunity; so that now I have to turn to the statistics of the question. The breeders of Natal will guarantee a colt, or filly, or four-years-old, quiet to be picketed, ready for embarkation, at about sixteen pounds. That is the sum, I have been given to understand, which will remunerate them for breeding. They are willing to take it, and they must understand their own business best; but it is not quite safe to take a

young horse directly from green food to put him on board ship, and change his forage to hard corn; and something more may be allowed for additional food, care, and risk, in order that these horses may be delivered to the middle man, shipper, or agent, in fit order for embarkation at D'Urban, D'Urban being the port; at which place they should remain as short a time as possible, from the nature of the low grounds in which it is situated. A fair calculation of the freight from Natal to Madras may be twelve pounds per head, which, being added to the original price of a horse, would bring his value, on arrival at the Indian market, to twenty-eight or thirty pounds; the latter sum should cover all expenses. 'Well,' says a friend, 'thirty pounds is possibly enough to pay for a horse bred in Natal, supposing him to be all right on his arrival. But our Government's minimum allowance for remounts is no less than forty-five pounds, and its maximum is fifty-five.' Thus, in the lowest scale, we have a margin of fifteen sovereigns clear to gain on each horse, and twenty-five in some cases, to the purchaser in Natal; and it must not be overlooked that, buying these horses at an average of sixteen or eighteen pounds, the best of them will probably fetch a deal more, being suitable for officers' chargers, or for other purposes. I do not, however, lay any stress upon this accidental circumstance, because there will be the risk in others of unsoundness or death to counterbalance it.

“ Now if the breeders could afford to transport these horses to the Indian market, their profit would be assured ; but they are unable to do so. The question is, then, will our Government help them and itself to barter these horses for money, saving itself a very handsome per-centage on its cavalry remounts? That it can do so seems to me unquestionable, for there is a hot season of the year in which their transports cannot be used for other purposes, and in which their use for this purpose would be clear gain to us. I cannot say how many horses one of these steam-ships would be able to carry from Natal to Madras market, but I conclude a great number. Suppose, however, that two hundred horses could be transported in this way at one time, the probable saving to the Government would be about three thousand pounds ; but it is incontestable that as soon as the market was assured, and a remunerative demand was established, the supply would be proportionally increased and the quality improved, until a very high class of cavalry remount might be secured to our Indian troopers, and less inconvenience be felt whenever circumstances induced a withdrawal or deficiency of the Arabian market. The guarantee of the breeders should be bounded by the minimum height of fourteen hands two inches, which is the lowest standard for troop-horses in India, and an arrangement should be made that freight only should be paid upon such horses as are landed alive in Madras. If acclimatisation be an object, it is all in their favour.

“It must not be supposed that though this question is somewhat new to us, it is not of sufficient importance to have engaged the attention of the settlers at Natal already employed in the business. The local papers have been handling the subject for some time past, and letters have been written to the Remount Commission in the Madras Presidency. From the information thus obtained, it seems that the horses can be supplied equal to the average of those required for the Indian army, and in numbers could be made to meet the demand, or nearly so. It may be asked why the regular ships which trade with Natal should not supply the apparently sole desideratum to the breeders—a means of transport. They are not calculated for the purpose, though, in the event of an established trade, vessels from the Cape might be engaged to call at Natal at prescribed periods. Whether these periods would suit the sellers and the buyers might be a question; but the whole subject might be cleared of its difficulties by a very simple process—viz., by the energy of the Government itself, as I have suggested, or by that private enterprise which, in a time when railways, mines, banking companies, and all other speculations seem to be smothered in obscurity or palsied by panic, must want an outlet for its resources and ability. Of course it is suggested first of all that Government should itself attend to its own proper business; because the main object seems to be a cavalry supply, and the easiest means of transport by Govern-

ment steamers, when they are not otherwise employed. But it seems equally feasible that any company, or that any private person, should take up the risk by hiring vessels for the occasion. The breeders have not sufficient means to carry out their views for themselves, and the colony has been so generally tightened for money that there seems very little chance of much being done if left to their own devices in this matter. It is a pity it should be so ; for there may come a time when the power of England in the East may awaken the cupidity and ambition of such indifferent spectators as the Russians, or such trustworthy neighbours and dependants as the North-Eastern Provinces ; and then it would be unpleasant to be in possession of an active arm of the service without horses to give it due efficiency. Whoever undertakes the delivery of these horses to the Indian market, be it Government, or company, or private speculator, will do well to attend to one thing—the selection of an agent who should live in Natal, and who should not only be a good judge of young horses, but fully competent to superintend the shipping and the preparations for the voyage, so as to avoid those losses and deterioration in value which bad management sometimes entails. The post could scarcely be an unpleasant one, nor unbecoming a gentleman, of whom (since times of distress have fallen upon many a one previously independent) there can be no lack, willing and able to do something for himself, and, with the requisite knowledge, and energy for the task.

Failures of banks and railroads must have stranded hundreds of officers, Indian and European, peculiarly cut out for such an occupation, and to such persons an appointment like it might be a godsend. We say nothing of directors and committee-men, some of whom are not much affected by the misery of those they have ruined, in consequence of their continued capacity for living upon settlements made in happier times.

“Intelligence on every subject connected with Natal is easy enough of acquirement—I mean as regards climate, living, society, health, and such colonial questions as come before an intending resident. I have nothing to say to those in the present article, as being apart from the interest which may be felt or excited by the main question of horses and their supply. As the embarkation and care of the young stock, however, holds a very prominent position in this inquiry, it would be wrong to negative that part of the business altogether.

“There is a certain part of Natal more favourable to horse-breeding than others. The high grounds or hills about Pietermaritzburg, the capital of the colony, are singularly adapted for establishing a station, where the colts selected from various parts could be stowed away in *depôt* previous to embarkation. This could be done at a more reasonable price by an agent than by the breeders themselves, who would expect a larger sum, should they have to bring up the best of their stock from the surrounding farms and country, some of

them to be rejected and sent back on their hands. The place is not only healthy, too, in itself, but conveniently situated for fodder, and on the road to the port of D'Urban, whence they would have to be shipped. It would be the duty of the agent to see that they were delivered at this place quite fit to go to work after their voyage, he himself having just selected them from the breeding-farm round about. He would do this according to the uses for which they were intended, whether for officers' chargers, troopers, sport, or draught. The responsibility of selection would of course rest with the agent, that of delivery at Pietermaritzburg with the breeders. The town might become thus the Horncastle or Balinasloe of the colony; and if the natural acuteness of the settlers requires encouragement, experience tells us that nothing is so calculated to produce it as systematic horse-dealing.

"I mentioned Maritzburg as being on the high road to D'Urban, the port whence the colts would be shipped. Now there is a sufficient reason for not selecting the place of embarkation as the depôt in which the horses should be stored. It is this, that D'Urban is not a healthy situation for long residence of stock. They may remain there with perfect safety for so long a time as may be required for embarkation; but as they should be gently exercised, picketed, and fed for a month or more before shipping, it will be better to avoid the possibility of anything like deterioration before leaving the colony. A certain amount of

confinement, too, and hard food, would be desirable, as a prelude to a longer and closer confinement on board ship; and would render them less impatient of control, and less liable to those accidents which usually arise from struggling and stamping. It has also been suggested that these horses should be placed in the hold, and not on the deck of the vessel, and that they should stand upon sand during the voyage. I have myself known horses to be much affected in the feet by stamping on deck, and one of the highest class Arabs, which was sent to this country, arrived with a foot-lameness caused by this effect to such an extent that it took many months and much care to eradicate the evil. When delivered sound, I am given to understand that they would be far better than any of the cross or country-bred Arabs, and by many degrees better than the Persian horses, which are never in common use in India.

“The care of these horses may be given to the Kaffirs, whose wages are not high, and who may be trusted if there be an English groom or two to superintend them. ‘*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*’ may be a very natural question as to these latter; but there are few Englishmen who are not obedient to their own countrymen, and their capability and knowledge in all that concerns horses is very superior to that of the native servants. The distance of Pietermaritzburg from the port is about fifty miles, and there would be no difficulty in leading these young horses safely such a distance, after the breaking and handling which I have

recommended. Any one who has seen a clever horseman lead a yearling from Hampton to Eltham will be satisfied on that score.

“These suggestions have been made in consequence of conversations and communications with cavalry officers and gentlemen much interested in this subject. They all appear to agree, first, in the desideratum of some such market to supply our deficiencies; in the capability of Natal for the purpose in respect to climate, blood, and economy; and its feasibility, if ordinary care and experience be brought to bear upon it. Some objection has been made to the difficulties of embarkation in certain ships on account of the bar which crosses the harbour, and which could not reach the ‘inner anchorage.’ But these ships are not those which are best adapted for carrying horses. The horses, however, even in this case, could be embarked without injury in fine weather at a small increase of expense. It is certainly worth the trial; for the object is of such importance that it seems strange that no earlier notice has been publicly taken of it in this country. That it has not entirely slept in the colony itself and in India, is proved by a very carefully-written letter which I have seen in one of the local journals from Captain Pennefather to Captain Goldie of the 16th Lancers, at Bangalore, in the Madras Presidency. He urges its adoption in the plainest language, giving ample instruction for the safe removal of the colts. He places the expenses

somewhat higher than my own informant, still allowing an ample margin for profit to the speculator; and before I conclude this article I shall add that officer's opinion on the efficiency of the animal, which is, after all, the most important item in the whole question. If the horses are not in themselves valuable, or in any way fall short of the requirements, it will be vain to multiply arguments for the purchase of a bad article after the furtherance of an attempt which must end in disappointment. That such will not be the case I am satisfied, by the following description, which points to the possession of a quality which we regard in a most favourable light.

“ ‘ I consider,’ says he, ‘ that this colony has peculiar facilities for supplying horses for export. The climate suits them, and although there has not been any regular demand, they are improving rapidly in quality and increasing in numbers. *They are very hardy as a rule, capable of performing long journeys on poor keep* without suffering any ill effects. Not being in any way connected with horse-breeding or horse-dealing, I feel that I can make these statements with perfect disinterestedness.’

“ This hardihood, let me remark, is the very thing which our *savans* declare is departing from among us. It is the quality which all horsemen so much desire, and whose absence the sportsman and the trooper is apt to deplore. Whether it is to be laid to the last half of the Abingdon mile, to the introduction or non-

prevention of disease in our thoroughbred stock, I cannot tell. I believe it to proceed almost directly from that spirit of gambling which forces the Englishman to regard a horse only in one light, a means of gain, and to overlook the qualities which will alone make him excellent as the propagator of a well-bred progeny for general purposes. And I trust the colonists, and all those who are connected with them, will endeavour to provide horses of good constitution, free from hereditary ailment, and of that wear-and-tear sort which are so highly prized when we get them, but of which so few remain."

Thus far the "Gentleman in Black." I have no opportunity of asserting these things to be facts, nor of confirming his impressions by personal experience; but I have heard that the colonists generally adopt his opinions. The climate about Pietermaritzburg is admirably adapted for horses. The distance from India is not very great; and the native breed is better than that of the Cape. The highlands, I have no doubt, are much better than the lowlands; there is plenty of keep, rich and succulent grasses, which are valuable, especially for the mares during the nursing season, and labour is not too high in price. I think, for my own part, that there are other great and legitimate sources of colonial wealth, such as improved agriculture, for which societies may do a great deal; and the coal question, since my departure, has been

made a great topic of discussion. Meetings have been called, and suggestions have been made; and I trust before this book sees the light that money will have been raised, and that steady unspeculative measures will have been taken, for ascertaining the nature of the coal and the expense of working it.

I eschew politics, and a question of internal expense in our colonies is always political. The inhabitants have as yet had no time to take larger views of their obligations to their country, or to one another. They will see these things in time; meanwhile it is wrong to force it on them. The natural disposition of the mother-country is that the colonies should be, as far as possible, self-supporting; but they require the assistance which the child requires from the parent; and but little astonishment can be expressed if the infant in its attempts at emancipation should fall. I could not pass over a subject so important without mention even in a sketch of this limit, and I return with a feeling of pleasure to the wanderings which have more interest for those who wish to study the life of Africa rather than her politics and internal resources.

One day when in the coffee-room of the inn, I met about a dozen fellow-countrymen, most of whom gave me general invitations to stay with them in their up-country retreats. One man especially, a Mr. McM——, insisted upon my going home with him, together with some of the others, to his house near Richmond, about fifty miles from Pietermaritzburg.

He was the most extensive farmer in Natal. He had grown about a hundred acres of Indian corn, or mealies, as they are termed here, and twenty-five acres of French beans. He was a great sportsman, and had, moreover, enormous herds of cattle and goats; sheep, he told me, he could never get to thrive. He possessed great influence over Kaffirs; and, from his extreme justice to them, could always get chiefs to send any amount of labour to plant and gather in his crops. The house was comfort itself, and twenty-five good beds could be made up in it nightly.

On one occasion he took me to a tiger-cat hunt, having arranged to have two hundred Kaffirs, and about sixty dogs to participate in the day's sport. We killed three leopards, McM—— shooting one dead at the first shot, after taking a deliberate aim at the heart. We brought home the skins. Altogether I enjoyed myself exceedingly, and had a most exciting day's amusement. My friend was of an economical turn of mind; so the following day, no sooner was breakfast ended than he said, "Now, my boys, we must go to work." Upon which he took us to a large cattle kraal, where there were sixty fat pigs. These, he informed us, were to be made into bacon; "and you, my boys, must help me kill them," added he, which task we performed with the greatest pleasure in the world. We killed at the rate of six a day, put them into salt at night, and pickled them for bacon. It gives me pleasure to be able to say that they turned

out well. After sticking all the pigs, we slaughtered a young cow, which was salted down into "junk." This commodity is always kept by old settlers, in case of emergency; though buck and poultry are the principal food of the European settler. I remained with McM—— two months; and I can safely say it was as an agreeable two months as could possibly be spent; one successive round of amusement and healthful exercise.

This part of the country is thickly populated with a very fine race of Kaffirs, who look up to McM—— as an "Inkose," or chief. Whilst with him I stood for two whole days as a scarecrow to frighten away the large monkeys and baboons, that robbed the mealy gardens to such an extent that, had we not known to the contrary, we might have suspected our Kaffir friends of having made a raid upon the fields during the night. These monkeys are great enemies to the corn crops, especially where the ground is near a wood. The birds here, too, are very numerous, and of beautiful plumage. Antelopes are plentiful; so that, altogether, it was about the pleasantest part of Natal I had visited, and highly prolific in sport.

From here I went into the township of Richmond, which is a very picturesque spot, and stopped the night with Archdeacon Ferne, whose proverbial hospitality need not be here discussed. He has a very nice little church. Here is also the residence of the magistrate, Mr. H——, a retired military officer; who has Kaffir

police under him to enforce order amongst the natives, who may happen to infringe the laws laid down by our Colonial Government. The society was altogether very pleasant. From this place I went on to a Mr. P——'s, who has a house and large track of land about forty or fifty miles up country, on the River Umlazi. Mr. P—— is the great brewer of Natal. He supplies D'Urban and Pietermaritzburg with beer. On one occasion I witnessed a waggon load of beer being conveyed across the river. The Kaffirs, miscalculating the strength of the current that was then running, suffered the oxen and waggon to drift down stream. Upon seeing this, two fine young Kaffirs rushed in to try to stop them; but, unfortunately, they were overpowered by the force of the stream, and were drowned, though the waggon and oxen arrived on the opposite bank in safety. Poor Mr. P—— was terribly distressed upon hearing of the accident, and that life had been lost upon his account. In the evening we were visited by the chief and a number of his people; he was much enraged at the loss of his young men, whom he seemed to regard as of his family circle. Mrs. P—— had to try in every possible way to conciliate him, which, after some time, she succeeded in doing. He came into the sitting-room, and partook of some refreshments. Kaffir-like, he soon forgot his loss, as troubles, not personal, rest lightly upon them; and we all parted good friends. Mr. P—— and myself returned the visit the next morning, and were graciously received.

This chief had an extensive kraal, and a proportionate taste for polygamy.

The Kaffirs being very hospitable, are always anxious to show civility to strangers. The chief suggested that he would give a war dance in our honour, if it would afford us any pleasure to witness it; at which idea we were much delighted. We then went back and satisfied Mrs. P—— that peace was proclaimed; and we told her that she must grace the next day's performance with her presence. The festivities took place the following day about three o'clock in the afternoon, and were inaugurated by the slaughter of a bullock, which was killed in the following manner:—Several Kaffirs leaned against the sides of the doomed beast, and held it tightly to prevent its moving. One of the men stepped in front of it, and with an assagai cut the brute's chest open, thrust in his arm, and after some severe tugs succeeded in pulling out the lights, liver, and intestines. These were eagerly devoured, while the poor animal, who was suffering dreadful agony, bellowed most piteously. The blood poured from the wound, which was lapped up while warm, in order to exhilarate his butchers for the approaching dance. The bullock was allowed to writhe in agony for some minutes before it was put an end to, when it was eagerly sliced up and devoured by the bloodthirsty Kaffirs. In a very short time nothing remained but the carcass.

Three hundred girls arrived at sundown, to join in

the dance, whose toilet consisted merely of a necklace of beads. Their skins were highly polished with the oil from the castor-oil plant. A corresponding number of young men, or boys, likewise came, attired in their war dress, which I have already described some pages back; and then followed the old men from the distant kraals, who are subservient to this chief. It was certainly a grand and extraordinary spectacle. We forgot the disgust we felt at the previous exhibition in the extreme novelty of the spectacle prepared for us. They were not all Taglionis; but there was much grace in their movements.

After this the chief was desirous to know how the English danced; so I endeavoured to illustrate it by dancing a polka by myself. I am no great performer; but I received unbounded applause and unmistakable signs of satisfaction at my unusual exhibition.

About one o'clock we bade adieu to our kind host, he having supplied us before leaving with a hearty supper, consisting of "amasi" (a kind of curd) and various tempting fruits. So gracious was he, that he himself and his people accompanied us about half a mile, singing Kaffir songs; the moon and stars making it almost as light as day.

CHAPTER IV.

A Fog.—Giant Kaffirs.—A Green Imamba.—Hunting.—My Nick-name.—Adventures with Snakes on the Zwaart Kop.—Visit from Tetelago.—Edendale.—Lahungu.—The Queen's Likeness.

I OFTEN wished that I had been a naturalist, as the country presented numerous specimens of the insect tribes, brilliant and handsome, with which I was wholly unacquainted. With some I could willingly have remained so, for I have lively reminiscences of the mosquitoes, who made themselves as much at home as if I had been on the most intimate terms with them all my life. In some cases the swelling and inflammation produced by the injection of their poison is so great as to have acquired a distinct name. These American mosquitoes are citizens of the world in one form or another, and it is no satisfaction to be told that they are only *Culices pipientes*, or common gnats, fostered by the heat of the climate, when they have inflicted a wound, which, in the unhealthy patient, becomes an open blain or blister, generally ending in a running tumour. It is known among the natives and colonists as the "Natal sore," and is of so violent a kind as to have seriously affected those who have neglected its

first appearance. It does not seem to me that the colony should be made to bear the blame of personal indiscretion or unhealthy blood.

If I say that on our return to Mr. P——'s house, we were able to fall asleep, in total disregard of mosquito stings, and to remain for several hours wholly unconscious of their visit, some idea may be formed of the hospitality with which the old chief had treated us, and the fatigue which was induced by an entertainment so liberal, and a spectacle so extraordinary as the one we had seen.

My friend had a fine one-storied house, containing fifteen rooms, with large verandahs; and as the saddles and horse-furniture were kept in them, it made it necessary that the Kaffirs should bring the horses every morning to the front of the house to be saddled, as people out here spend the greater part of their existence on horseback.

During my visit I occupied most of my time in farming, Mr. P—— keeping a larger flock of sheep than any other settler I met with on the highlands. From here I had determined to proceed to Richmond, for which purpose I procured a guide, to direct me over the mountain paths, as a pleasant mode of travelling, and for the sake of the scenery, which is in places fine. Unluckily a dense fog came up suddenly, and not a path nor any object whatever was visible. The guide, unwilling to acknowledge his ignorance, like guides in other countries and higher places, got me into the

middle of the Umlazi river. A storm came up, and when it began to thunder, my conductor utterly lost his presence of mind, whatever that may be in the case of a Kaffir. He had forgotten now, or had pretended up to this time not to be able, to speak a word of English; but sudden fear, which strikes some men dumb, had a different effect upon my guide, for he commenced singing the first few lines of "God save the Queen," which an English lady some years ago had taught him. There was no great harmony in his voice, nor delicacy in his execution; but as it was intended as a prayer for protection, he probably knew best what sort of music would prove acceptable under the circumstances. It struck me that in classic mythology he would have found no deity to listen to him. In writing of it at this distance of time it sounds very ridiculous, though our position was anything but an enviable one. Whilst in the water my guide became very obstinate, principally from fear, and I had great difficulty in making him proceed; and on arriving at the opposite side of the river he called out most lustily to ascertain whether we were near a kraal. He had more confidence in company than in "God save the Queen," which is not to be wondered at considering his deficiencies of voice and ear.

The echo (for it would leave a wrong impression to call it the sound) of his voice was immediately answered by Kaffirs about five miles off, towards whom we repaired. This is their usual mode of signalling; and they

never lose themselves even in the densest fog, as they are always guided by the echoes of the voices of friendly Kaffirs.

My conductor brought me to a kraal of four huts, inhabited by the largest people that I ever saw during my stay in Natal. I certainly believe the women were six feet two in height, vigorous, and muscular, and the men must have been six feet six or eight, as they appeared to be large in proportion. On walking into their kraal, the dogs exhibited great ferocity, and their masters were not much better, no one attempting to beat them off. It was not until I evinced a determination to enter that I could get any attention or hospitality shown me. This is unlike the general character of the people. During the space of ten minutes, these giants, as they might almost be called, stood eyeing me, and talking amongst themselves. When their conversation was ended, and apparently satisfied of our peaceable intentions, perhaps our incapacity of offence, they became very civil, and told me it was not safe to proceed until the fog cleared. In fact, they now would not let me depart, being as eager to keep me as a guest as they had at first appeared to be the reverse, insisting upon my partaking of their hospitality, which consisted in giving me up a hut, and bringing me boiled "mealies" and eggs. Until far into the night they persisted in dancing and singing songs in my honour, a species of entertainment which I would willingly have foregone.

In the morning the atmosphere was clear, and I

regretted having missed probably some picturesque scenery the day before, for I found my hut was on the side of a very steep mountain, most beautifully situated. My host pressed me much to remain; his request was not very unlike command, and I gladly consented to do so, finding the party almost too polite to get away from. I was very glad afterwards that I embraced this opportunity of seeing the Kaffir at home. I felt almost like Gulliver among the Brogdignags. These large women were most attentive to my requirements, and placed all that they had at my disposal. They gave me "outchualla" to drink. It is a strong beer of the country. From what it was made I never succeeded in discovering, as it was always brewed secretly by the women. My food was very good during my stay, consisting almost entirely of "mealies" and roasted goat. When not too old and tough, it has much the flavour of *chevreuil*.

By way of amusement during my stay here, a hunt was got up. About fifty natives from some neighbouring kraal joined us, each armed with four or five assagais, some with more. All of these persons were fine men, active and courageous, and evidently keen sportsmen. They were also bent upon letting me see what they could do, whether for the purpose of producing an agreeable impression or not I cannot tell: possibly for the gratification of their own vanity, or to excite my fears. The sport commenced in a large forest two miles off, and the first thing that met my

view was a green "imamba," or tree snake, which is a small boa-constrictor. It had a most repulsive appearance, so we left it alone. The Kaffirs do not kill snakes, it being contrary to their religion. They are willing to use a cat's-paw, and have no objection to the "umlunga," or white man, destroying them, as a heretic's soul can be but of small importance. Before we had been at work long we heard the Kaffirs all excitement—they had viewed a buck, and started it. The manner in which they surrounded it was simply marvellous, each one throwing his assagai as he passed with such dexterity, that it rarely, if ever, missed the mark aimed at. The buck fell about a hundred paces in front of me. It was hung upon a tree, and a Kaffir was left to watch over it to keep off birds of prey, which always collect when anything is killed, ready to pounce upon and devour it.

The next thing we gave chase to was a fine tiger-cat, better understood in England as the leopard, which we kept at bay until killed. After having skinned this, we came upon a herd of five or six more buck, three of which fell to our assagais. The show of sport satisfied our native attendants, and we returned to the kraal highly delighted with the day's work.

The Kaffirs prefer eating their meat *au naturel*; but I confess myself to be English enough to relish it more when cooked. We therefore proceeded to dress what I required for my own consumption. Whilst partaking of this repast these fair giantesses kept off the mosquitoes

by aid of rough fans made from the feathers and dried wings of birds.

It is the custom to nick-name such people as the natives take a fancy to immediately upon landing. I have reason to congratulate myself upon being a great favourite, and forthwith I was christened "Buttahs." I consequently was always addressed by the Kaffirs as "Inkose Buttaho," which, being interpreted, signifies "a man who speaks from the bottom of his stomach." This was a compliment to my voice, which is bass; I might have been more assiduous in England in cultivating it, but had no idea that it would prove so valuable.

My host, the chief of this small tribe with whom I was sojourning, was anxious to display his wealth. In this respect I found but little difference between civilised and savage life. The highest aristocrats of England, when they have possessions in the shape of herds, are very proud of them, and not over-indulgent to those of their friends who do not participate in their taste. He showed me his cows, goats, and mealy gardens, with an evident desire that I should exhibit my astonishment in return. He said he could afford to take to himself another wife. Having only four, it showed a spirit of moderation in a man to whom polygamy would have saved a great deal of trouble as an exhibitor.

After seeing all his property I took my departure; and I confess that I felt great reluctance in doing so, after the pleasant visit I had spent, and great kindness received at his hands. After his first reception of

me it was a most agreeable surprise, and flattering to my vanity. The chief insisted upon accompanying me on my journey nearly as far as Richmond, which we accomplished on foot; he providing men to lead my horses and carry my blanket.

The more I reflect upon this pleasant visit the more I am disposed to think that the Kaffirs possess many virtues of a savage life; and that they would be amenable to tact. I have no doubt that they are hasty, cruel, suspicious, and, possibly, treacherous; but they are singularly hospitable, and industrious, enterprising, and willing to trade with strangers. They are a remarkably handsome race, both men and women; those that I have mentioned of very great size, and finely formed men. Their hair is black, but less woolly than either Hottentots or Negroes; their lips are less thick; their noses arched, not flat; their complexion varies from black to a copper colour, and even to a yellowish-brown. They are just the men to make warm friends or bitter enemies; and to none does the old proverb apply more aptly than to these tribes; that they should be chastised only so far as that they may become friends, and only be so far petted as that they may become enemies. The women are among the handsomest of the natives of Southern Africa, though I hardly appreciated their good looks; too late an intercourse with my own countrywomen had made me fastidious, notwithstanding their really kind consideration of my personal wants.

The meaning of the word Kaffir, or Kafir, is "unbeliever." These men have no written laws, nor prescribed forms of religion. They are governed by long-established practice and usage; and have a general belief in the Supreme Being. I have already described the sort of clanship which exists among them. The villages are each under the control of one petty chieftain, such as the host whose manner of life and hospitality I had witnessed and enjoyed. These, again, are subject to the sole authority of the "umkumkani," or great chief, who holds the same position, with regard to the inferior chiefs, as our Norman sovereigns held with reference to the great barons; and who is looked up to as the holder of the land, and to whom tithe of slaughtered cattle and of the product of agriculture, if not offered, is presumed to be due. There is a sort of feudality about the system which recommends it to the consideration of the antiquary rather than to the traveller or sportsman; and I shall, therefore, pass it over without further remark.

From Richmond I returned to the Umlazi, where I stayed for a week, whence I went on a visit to a large farmer, who grew forage for the military of Fort Napier. I was somewhat surprised to see an English reaping-machine at work; it was found to be a perfect godsend, and the Kaffirs were actually binding up the sheaves after it as cleverly as any Europeans. This farmer seemed very hopeful of the colony, and altogether things appeared to be prosperous. I remained

with him three or four days, and then went back to Pietermaritzburg. My stay was very short here, as I had already visited the town. I got some English letters ready for the mail, and left for the Zwaart Kop as soon as possible.

This mountain is about 4,800 feet above the level of the sea; and upon the side of it I took a house for a short period. My first night there I was overrun by rats, lizards, and mice; and I heard a rat in the agonies of death. I aroused my Kaffir attendant, Joe, who, though a great villain, was very useful; and he got me a light. We looked into an old cupboard; whereupon he uttered such a terrific groan that I thought he must be dying. The reason of his fears was that his lynx eye had discovered two large puff-adders, that had got into this old cupboard. They had hitherto lived a very happy life, eating all rats which had the misfortune to enter. We lost no time in closing the door; and the next thing to be considered was how best to destroy these reptiles. Joe suggested that a hole should be bored in the door, through which an assagai could be passed, and that thus we should spear them to death, keeping ourselves upon the right side. By this means I soon put an end to them, during which operation Joe yelled in the most frightful manner. It was, as I have before mentioned, against their religion to destroy snakes; but Joe's conscience was an easy one, and we made an end of them.

At dawn that morning I was aroused by Tetelago.

a chief of great power in the Pietermaritzburg country, accompanied by his "indunas," or ministers, dressed in their best skins and feathers, with his two favourite wives. One of them had on her head a large jar of outchualla, and the other a pot of honey, poultry, and other good things, which they conveyed into my chamber. Having placed them as presents at my feet, they squatted themselves down to witness the effect of their liberality.

Tetelago seemed to wish to be on good terms, and invited me to go and see him. I did so the same day, and found he was a friend of Goza (another chief), who possessed large herds and many waggons. He insisted upon my remaining at his kraal. At first I said it was impossible to leave my house, which was entirely unprotected; this he would not allow to stand in the way, offering to send a body of his own tribe to keep guard in my absence. Feeling confident all my goods would be well protected, I sojourned with him one week, which was kept up with all kinds of excitements—eating, drinking, dancing, and hunting being the chief of our amusements.

From here I made an excursion to Edendale, where there is a fine corn-mill, which is worked by a rapid stream flowing down from the Zwaart Kop. This mill supplies nearly all the corn which is consumed in Pietermaritzburg. A Wesleyan mission-station was erected here. Very large herds of cattle are kept in this neighbourhood. On my way home I started a

fine buck ; this I stalked, and having brought it down with my rifle, I placed it across my saddle-bow, and rode home in triumph. After this long day's excursion I felt much fatigued, and placed myself, as Mr. Weller calls it, "in the arms of Porpus." I slept soundly.

The next day a Kaffir named Lahungu introduced himself to me. He said he had been in England, which I soon found out had not improved him. He had been taken up, and made much of by a lady, a great promoter of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, and other institutions of a similar character, and had been exhibited as a specimen of the good work wrought by the missionaries. When this man had made a good deal of money in London, he came out to Natal, and there settled. He very shortly became a polygamist and lived as all Kaffirs do. He tried to get me to lend him some money, which he promised to work out with the oxen, his great idea being to get the money before the work was commenced. It may be needless to remark that I would not have anything to do with him, as truth is not among the virtues of the Christianised Kaffirs. They are better in the rough state.

An old friend of mine from England paid me a visit the following day, and requested me to join him in an expedition which he wished to make to a Dutchman's house, about eighty or ninety miles off. Being glad to avail myself of the opportunity, I took two horses, riding one and leading the other. We travelled

through a most extensive and magnificent country. The first night out we stopped at a large Kaffir location, and were most hospitably and kindly treated ; and in the morning we arose early, and took a bath in the river. The chief brought us our horses, and we were soon far away from the kraal. We calculated on reaching our destination that evening, but were mistaken, so had to take another night's rest *en route*.

The woods of this country struck me as being very peculiar. The tops of the trees were covered with a species of lichen, which arose from the dampness of the night fog.

About three o'clock we arrived at the Dutchman's house ; he was very glad to see us, and spoke English tolerably well. He owned a few Angola goats, which appear to be animals that will ultimately pay in this country. He showed us some excellent sport, and we made some large bags of partridges and other small game. He also brewed a very delicious punch, made from peaches, and which I found was a common drink with the Dutch. There were several ladies here, and in the evening we amused ourselves with dancing and singing.

I had in my possession some cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, one with the picture of the Queen printed upon it. This was especially admired ; and I offered it to my hostess, who was particularly charmed with her new acquisition. She appeared the next morning at breakfast with it bound round her head, making a

kind of turban, which excited a good deal of envy amongst the others.

We returned home by the same route as that by which we came. My friend stayed with me that night, and left early the following morning.

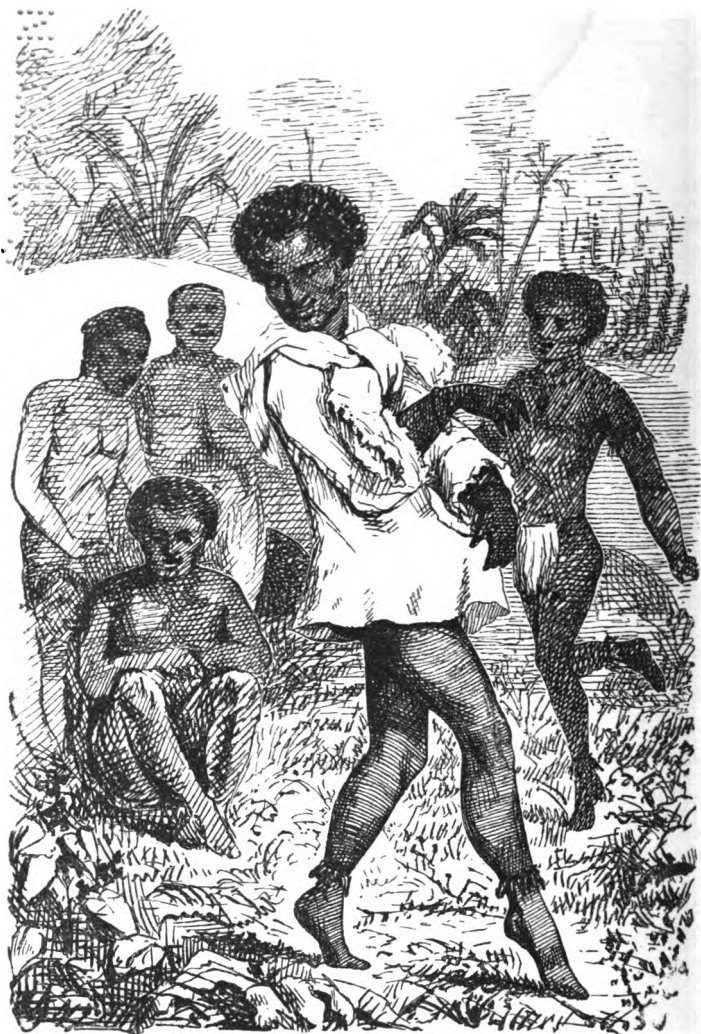
CHAPTER V.

Lynch Law.—A “Trek” into the far interior.—Colonists’ Motto.—A Caravan of Dutch Waggon.—Tooth extracting.—A favourite Song.—An Ant-Bear.—A Night with a Dutch Boer.

A KAFFIR is a mischievous animal, and, like his neighbour, the Negro, not very considerate who suffers, so long as his own humour or vanity is gratified. He is occasionally fond of appropriating property which does not belong to him ; though, in the case I am about to relate, I do not think that such was his object. I believe fun and curiosity were at the bottom of a freak which might have cost him his life.

A missionary lady, whose name I need not mention, arrived from England, and took up her residence at Edendale. She brought out with her an unusually large trousseau of under wearing apparel. A Kaffir, knowing this, availed himself one evening of the opportunity, while the enthusiastic lady was preaching to a congregation of Hottentots, to get hold of certain portions of her under-clothing, which he thought most becoming ; and immediately ran off with them to show himself to my servant. I heard a great noise in the kitchen, and, on going out to ascertain the cause, there

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KAFFIR ARRAYED IN STOLEN APPAREL.

I beheld a most ludicrous sight. A very large Kaffir was arrayed in the reverend lady's drawers, put on as a vest; he thrust an arm through each leg of the pantaloons, and the frills, with which they were ornamented, hung over his wrists. A *chemise de nuit* he had tied by the sleeves round his waist, as a kind of skirt, not being able to get inside it. Soon his peace of mind was disturbed, as a portion of the congregation, who had heard of the theft, set off in search of the thief. They traced him to my house, where they came to recover the lady's valuable property, and arrest the transgressor. They surrounded the house, and would in all probability have killed the fellow then and there had I not interfered. In this extremity I was obliged to threaten that I would shoot the first man who laid hand on the prisoner; and I firmly believe that this extreme measure was the means of saving his life. My own Kaffirs, with my assistance, bound him; and we despatched a messenger to the nearest magistrate, to have him properly arrested and arraigned. In the meantime, however, he managed to slip out of his cords—a dress not by any means so gratifying to his vanity as the lady's chemise—and, jumping through a window, reached a wood, into which he was pursued. Here he was overtaken, and dragged through a bush, called *vacht-een-bidgte*, or “wait-a-bit,” belonging to the acacia family. It is covered with sharp, strong, barbed thorns; and when in blossom it is a handsome plant, bearing a purple flower. In a few minutes the

poor wretch had all the flesh off his body, and was left nearly a perfect skeleton. This I considered very summary vengeance for so trifling a misdemeanour.

And now there presented itself a good opportunity for beginning my real purpose in leaving home. My friend, Mr. L——, came next day to visit me, bringing letters with him from England. During his stay we decided upon making an expedition into the far interior, and preparations for the journey were soon completed. The day we fixed upon to start was Sunday; and our first halt was at a store called Crow's-nest, where we remained all night. The host kindly gave us letters of introduction to some substantial Dutch Boer settlers.

Next morning we proceeded on our expedition, and soon came up with some Kaffirs, who told us they had seen waggons, which, if we were quick, we should reach by sundown. This happily proved true, as smoke, curling up from the camp-fires in the distance, plainly indicated. Upon coming up to these waggons, we found the inmates were Germans, who were returning from their annual journey to Pietermaritzburg, where they had been to purchase their provisions for the next twelve months. Three waggons were filled with groceries and the other necessaries of a civilised, if not very refined, state of existence. They seemed pleased that we should come and join them around their fires. We pulled out our flasks, a never-failing source of mutual good fellowship, and soon became

friends ; they entertained and instructed us by telling anecdotes of the country. We made a hearty supper of venison and Cape gooseberry-pudding, "knee-haltered" our horses, got our blankets ready, and prepared to sleep in the open air. We managed to keep up a large fire all the night, a necessary precaution against cold and beasts.

Next morning the travellers—old travellers, with an eye to the main chance—suggested that if we would procure sufficient buck for them, they would take charge of our things, and guarantee the use of a waggon for us to sleep in. This we agreed to do ; and, consequently, travelled in company till we came to the falls of the Umgeni river, which are the finest and grandest falls in South Africa. We found it very enjoyable, and the air so cool—being near the water—that we made a permanent stand for a few days to hunt ipiti buck, the smallest of all South African antelopes. They are most beautiful little creatures, about the size of an Italian greyhound. They give good sport and are excellent eating.

We had very good sport for some few days among the smaller sorts of game. Our evenings were generally musical, spent in singing and instrumental music. One of the party, like his countrymen in general, was a good flautist. My friend, fond of meeting his troubles half way, frequently said, "Hamilton, this is too good to last ;" to which I always replied, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

No one can imagine the freedom of thought and the happy sensation that these treks give one. The colonist's motto is, "A good horse, a good gun, a faithful Kaffir, a tin kettle, a pair of thin breeches, and a woollen shirt to be washed twice a day." They might have added "freedom and trek," with a light heart to enjoy them.

Upon rising one morning, we found we were in the midst of quite a township of Dutch waggons, that had "outspanned" during the night, laden with wool, ostrich feathers, ivory, and some other exports of the colony, which were being conveyed to D'Urban, for shipment to England. It was a gay and busy scene.

In these remote parts the Dutch always travel in huge caravans. It is their custom to move about in large bodies, several families joining together. There is never danger for an Englishman to "trek" alone, for the Kaffir, as a rule, holds him in great respect. One or two of the ladies in this caravan which we entered were suffering from toothache, and asked whether either of us understood dentistry, to which my friend L—— replied in the affirmative. He is a man of much decision, and there and then produced his instruments, and extracted several teeth. He did more, for he also made and put in new ones, much to the relief and delight of our fair companions. Dentistry is fortunately a hobby of Mr. L——, and he never travels without his instruments, though he is often without patients.

The following day the whole party turned out on a

hunting expedition, and killed several wild pigs. As an article of food they are very bad representatives of our English breed; nevertheless, they afford excellent sport, which was our first object.

In the evening, when all were assembled, we formed a very cheerful and respectable party, the Dutch supplying the peach rum, and we the tobacco. Songs were called for, and sung all round; and as a specimen of the class, I will give a few verses of a favourite song amongst us:—

“The King shall take the Queen,
The Queen shall take the Knave,
And as we are in good company,
Good liquor we will have.

Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown,
Here’s to thee with all my heart;
Take another glass or two,
And that before we part.

“The Queen shall take the Knave,
The Knave shall take the ten,
And as we are in good company,
We will keep it up like men.

Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“The Knave shall take the ten,
The ten shall take the eight,
And as we are in good company
We will keep it up till late.

Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“The eight shall take the seven,
The seven shall take the six,
And as we are in good company,
We will keep it up like bricks.

Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“ The seven shall take the six,
The six shall take the five,
And as we are in good company,
We will keep the game alive.
Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“ The six shall take the five,
And the five shall take the four,
And as we are in good company,
We won’t go home any more.
Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“ The five shall take the four,
The four shall take the three,
And as we are in good company,
We will have a jolly spree.
Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown, &c.

“ The four shall take the three,
The three shall take them all,
And as we are in good company,
We won’t go home at all.
Chorus.—Here’s to thee, Tom Brown,” &c.

I say nothing about the music or the poetry of this semi-barbarous canticle. In neither aspect would it have satisfied the fastidious taste of Mr. Costa (we beg his pardon, now Sir Michael Costa), nor was the chorus given exactly with that expression which delights the admiring critic of the *Huguenots*, or the *Israel in Egitto*; but if uninstructed zeal and unimpaired lungs can be accepted in lieu of greater accomplishments, of a truth there was nothing wanting in our performance. An English university has done worse in every way after supper; and it had that invaluable quality (which is said to have been once deprecated by a weeping

undergraduate at Oxford, on hearing that very noisy but popular chorus of "We won't go home till morning") of putting us in mind of home. I am the last man in the world to give way to maudlin sentiment, but if a man finds himself incapable of appreciating the pathetic ballads of old England in his own country, let him try the most barbarous imitations of them some thousand miles away from the pianos and voices he has left behind him, and I think his patriotism will break through all conventionalities of melody and taste. It was impossible not to notice the revival of good spirits upon each refrain, as it ascended and vanished into thin air; and I could scarcely have regarded my day as finished while with these simple people, without its crowning pleasure of good wishes to our English representative, dear Tom Brown, in whose welfare the Dutchmen took as much interest as ourselves.

Night in these, as in other warm latitudes, seemed to be the time for hundreds of animals and reptiles to come out of their lurking places, and prowl about in search of prey; so we never lay down in our waggons without first looking round on all sides to see if any sport could be found. We were not unfrequently successful, and a night's rest was bought at an increase of exercise.

Our Dutch friends commenced breaking up their camp, and though our acquaintance had been short, we were sorry to say farewell. The day on which we parted being fine, we also made up our minds to collect our oxen, and determined upon continuing our "trek"

all that day and through the night, favoured as we were by a full moon. A night "trek" is considered one of the pleasantest things in African travel, though it has occasional drawbacks, from the probabilities of being eaten. A great ant-bear crossed our path on the present occasion; it was the first I had seen, and my friend shot it, but as it was not serviceable for our table, we left his body a prey for the vultures.

The next day was occupied in pursuit of game for our own consumption, and led to a pleasant adventure; but we did not find anything until late in the afternoon. At length we came upon a herd of deer, and our dogs, singling out one, ran it to so great a distance, that it took us quite out of our course. About three o'clock in the afternoon, considerably tired, and with invigorated appetites, we came in sight of a Dutchman's residence. Upon reaching the house a young lady greeted us with a particularly winning smile. She was exceedingly good-looking, and attired as a Kaffir girl. We inquired whether she would give us a night's shelter, to which modest request she immediately assented, as far as she was concerned, but with a frankness worthy of a Fermoy beauty, added, "You must ask the boss." The word does not sound so well as "papa;" but with the promptitude of an English or Irish father, whose permission was thus solicited, the old gentleman shortly made his appearance. His manner (and we certainly can excuse some display of astonishment on his part) was anything but cordial upon seeing us in conversation

with his daughter, and on hearing that we had every intention of remaining his guest until the following day. The daughter shared none of his suspicions, but, being anxious to provide something for our refreshment, ran off to the poultry yard. She appeared at table with a goose, which she had caught, killed, and dressed, herself within a short hour. The father became more genial during the meal, and helped us liberally. There could be no doubt that we did honour to his liberality, and so gratified was he, that he ended by at length saying that it would give him pleasure to have our society for that night, and to hear our adventures. Not unaware of the girl's charms, nor of the susceptibility of a vagabond's nature, he informed us that his daughter was engaged to be married to a fine young Dutchman. The next morning, to confirm his assertion, this lovesick Boer put in an appearance. He reached the house on horseback, and was so indignant at our having stayed during the night under the same roof with his *fiancée*, that I verily believe, had it not been for the girl's own expostulations, this enthusiastic lover would have challenged us to coffee and assagais in a saw-pit. I confess that I have no weakness for Dutch beauty as a rule, and with the main object of my wanderings before me, I hardly think I should have been tempted from my path by such an *ignis fatuus* as matrimony with a lady in the position of our hostess, betrothed to another, and a foreign settler, in South Eastern Africa. Perhaps I have my own feelings to consult, which look

nearer home, believing that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Be that as it may, my friend L—— had other scruples, and other motives of self-restraint. He was susceptible in the highest degree, and like a piece of tinder, ignited at once, and confessed to me afterwards that he should have gone in for the prize, but for his tenderness towards the gentleman—a principle which did not influence me at all. I would willingly have seen his jealousy punished by the loss of his mistress, and had I known how great an impression the girl had made on L——, should certainly have urged him to take the place of the Dutch lover. He was very far gone, and on leaving the house repeated to me the melancholy apology of defeated swains—"Better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all."

CHAPTER VI.

Kaffir Dogs.—Iguanas.—Tiger-cat Hunt.—Hyenas.—A Thunderstorm.—Ostriches.

By the aid of our pocket-compasses, notwithstanding the intricacies of the road, we managed to come up with our German friends once more. Since our separation they had been very anxious about our safety, and evidently thought that we had come to an untimely end. During our absence we had shot some magnificent wild duck, which abound in the many rivers we had crossed; and we were thus enabled to add to our friends' larder. A sad accident had befallen us in the loss of one of our dogs. In crossing a stream the poor animal fell a prey to a crocodile.

The Kaffir dog is an active, wire-haired, long-nosed hound, which much resembles the lurcher. He is the constant companion of the native, offensive or defensive; and is generally found, to the number of forty or fifty, in the kraals. He has to provide his own food, and in the dead of night constant howling and barking may be heard throughout the country. We shall have further opportunities of speaking of them and their qualities—companions of all our expeditions.

We travelled about fifteen miles a day, making short excursions for the purposes of hunting and shooting round our caravan, leaving it in the meantime in charge of our attendants.

One day our dogs stood barking and scratching at a large hole near a rivulet. What hole this could be we could not make out; but we were not long in gratifying our curiosity. We cut some grass, sprinkled some brimstone over it, stuffed it down the aperture, and set fire to it. Suddenly an object appeared, which somewhat startled me, as this was my first introduction to it. In a few seconds there came out an iguana, which is a species of enormous lizard, a most hideous looking reptile, which was closely followed by another. We managed to kill them both; and, feeling a strong desire for food at the time, satisfied our appetites by cutting a large slice out of what appeared to us to be the most delicate part of the body. We then cooked it over an ant-heap, in the manner which I have already described, and served it up without any sauce but our hunger. It certainly was more palatable than one would suppose, judging from its objectionable appearance; in flavour it was not very unlike veal.

The Kaffirs came to us one day, when we were on one of these foraging excursions, and informed us that they had lost several head of cattle from a leopard, or tiger-cat, that was supposed to have taken up his residence, about a mile distant, in a "kloof," which is a deep wild ravine, covered with thick bush, generally

with a rapid stream flowing through it. These kloofs are almost impassable, excepting to natives and wild beasts, for which they form a sanctuary. The great difficulty of penetrating these kloofs to the European arises from the trees and plants, which grow with great luxuriance upon the sides.

✱ We asked these natives to bring their dogs, and some more of their people, which they did. We then proceeded to hunt for the beast, and, after beating about the jungle for half-an-hour, one of the Kaffirs suddenly gave the alarm, that he had seen it lying full length, and basking in the sun. From that moment the whole field was in a state of excitement. The dogs commenced barking, and, standing round at some distance, kept him at bay. Before we could take a good aim the natives began throwing their assagais indiscriminately, a mode of attack which increased the leopard's ferocity. At this juncture one unfortunate dog got a pat from the beast's paw, which instantly laid it dead. This excited the Kaffirs still more, as they are much attached to their dogs; and they continued to throw their assagais with more effect. We came in at the last moment, and gave it the *coup de grâce* by discharging a rifle into its heart; a consummation of the business which seemed to afford our Kaffir friends the greatest relief. ✱ We told them we would remain in the neighbourhood for a few days, in case any more should appear. Out of gratitude for the services we had rendered them, and which afforded

us quite as much pleasure as themselves, they brought us everything we required; and within two or three days we had the satisfaction of presenting them with another victim, the result of the same sort of expedition.

One evening, while lounging about the waggon smoking our pipes, my friend L—— saw a dark object moving stealthily about. Having my rifle close at hand, I fired at this great unknown, and upon coming up to it found I had brought down a large hyena, which the Kaffirs call "impisi." They were better acquainted with the habits of these animals than we were, and said more would be certain to follow the steps of its comrade. In expectation of the visit we baited an "umowane," which is a tiger trap, with a piece of goat, and about twelve o'clock the natives, shrieking in a most unearthly manner, informed us that an immense hyena had been caught in the trap by the leg, and was still trying its utmost, by biting it off, to make its escape. We lit up wood torches, and went in search of the enemy, for "excitement here is better than physic," says the Dutch maxim. A curious characteristic of the cruelty of the natural man here showed itself. The Kaffirs would not allow us to despatch the brute with our rifles at once, as they preferred slow torture to killing it outright. It died at length, tenaciously holding on to life, in spite of its wounds. When the skin was stripped off we carried it back to our waggon as a trophy. We should have caught

another that night, but that the intense excitement caused by our past and present success maddened the Kaffirs, and made these men dance round the dead body instead of helping us to look for more. Their pantomimic display was enough to have frightened all the hyenas in South Africa, and successfully kept them at bay.

This part of Africa is no exception to the rest of the world. Wherever man appears (that is, the white man, or civilised man) the wilderness disappears. There is no exception to this universal rule; and whatever the virtues of the savage (and there are some high qualities which analytical critics may place higher than the mere absence of vice), whatever his nature, his feelings, above all, his religious belief, or sentiments, from the Socratic idea of a Supreme Being to the lower abominations of Obeah worship, he retreats step by step from before the face of civilisation. I am no admirer of missionary labours, as they have generally developed themselves in these countries, or, indeed, in many others; and I cannot attribute to their efforts the results I have seen in the spread of refinement, and the cultivation of the arts of peace. But the fact remains, notwithstanding, that the European does supplant the black or red skin wherever he carries himself and his Penates; whether it be under the shadow of the true cross, or under the more powerfully persuasive incitements of commercial activity. We are not the earliest colonists, but we are the best. The Portuguese and the Dutch were before us in Southern Africa; but,

as I think, they are neither liked as much, nor feared as much, as ourselves. Be that as it may, we have driven the natives farther and farther from the coast, not more by absolute war than by that persuasive mode of aggression which civilisation never fails to adopt, and which says more for its cupidity, its tact, and obedience to necessity, than for its justice.

The Kaffir war, in 1835, resulted, as might have been expected, in a considerable reduction of their territory; or, as we may say, in other words, in a very marked retirement of the Kaffir tribes towards the interior. So far back as that, the colonist took a new line of demarcation for their boundary, from the Keiskamma to the great Kei river, driving out, partly by force of arms, and partly by force of treaty, the Amakosa tribes, and taking possession of their territory. In the Cape Colony there have been constant quarrels and border wars between the Dutch and Kaffirs; and in 1846 another formal declaration of war took place. The results are too well known to need recapitulation in a book not devoted to such intelligence; but the example seems never to have been lost upon our countrymen in India, Africa, or elsewhere.

But if the native backs into the wilds as we advance, so does the game; and every day we found it more and more abundant as we made our way into the interior. There was a time, indeed (but of those halcyon days I know nothing), in which elephants were numerous, and lions, leopards, and hyenas mixed

cheerfully in society, without waiting for an invitation, or giving us any trouble in looking for them; when the ordinary haunts of a sparse civilisation, and of a cultivation which was far from the standard of the Royal Agricultural Society, made the land to abound in antelopes, hares, pheasants, and partridges. But such signs of savage life are no more to be met with without considerable exertion. The country in which such sport is to be found is far from social life. A few Kaffir villages are spread about here and there; the country abounds with rough and precipitous hills and deep valleys. Herds of cattle are to be seen but rarely; and the whole picture presents features which are desolate and appalling to every one but the most adventurous sportsman. Thick and bushy coverts conceal the rhinoceros occasionally, and the hyenas are of a more than ordinary ferocity; while the dank osiers, and long and tangled reeds of the rivers serve as beds for hippopotami and alligators. Baboons, monkeys, and serpents of various kinds can all be found; but not without patience, courage, and a disregard for the comforts of life.

For this reason I deprecate the attempt of any sportsmen to seek Natal as a hunting-ground, unless they fully make up their minds to go up to the neighbourhood of the Drakenberg Mountains, or into the Klipp River territory, as large and small game is gradually being driven farther and farther away from the border countries, although many of the "kloofs"

in the Drakenberg range literally teem with it. Among other objects of my search, deer of various kinds formed a considerable item; and one fine morning I was rejoiced to hear that a herd was lying near our encampment. This was the first time we had observed them to approach a human being; for, in consequence of their extreme wildness, we generally had to go some distance, and that very carefully, to meet with them. We killed one, and we were glad to get him; for it is no humiliating confession that we required something for "tiffin;" and with that sauce which was always at hand, we found it to be delicious eating. The discovery of these deer was not beneficial to our *morale*; for, being so well provided with this venison, we became idle, and rested ourselves and horses—as is the custom with all such savages, as I was gradually becoming.

Our attendants were strongly convinced there was some considerable quantity of large game in the neighbourhood, and busied themselves in procuring fuel. It struck us rather forcibly that they were quite in earnest; or that they had fair grounds for their convictions, it being unusual for them to do anything without being ordered to do it. As we were now encamped in the open "veldt," where we might have been attacked at any time during the night, it became necessary to have fires to keep off the larger animals and wild beasts.

After a sultry day, towards sundown, it began, on one especial occasion, to thunder and lighten in the

most terrible manner. Now, the fury of an African storm is a thing so appalling as to alarm the boldest, and to defy all description. Suddenly the black clouds gather themselves together in dense masses, rolling slowly up from different quarters, and lowering over head. What light remains is of a lurid, sulphurous colour. The air, before the thunder, is still, and oppressively sultry. It is one of those signals of nature which even wild beasts understand to retire to their lairs. The lightning is so exceedingly vivid as to become almost blinding; it plays about, and rests in the atmosphere, though in divers quarters, for, apparently, some seconds, while the thunder is incessant. Nor does it come in broken claps, as we are accustomed to have it come in England, even in our worst storms; but in one tumultuous roar, which is taken up by a hundred echoes, and continues to roll round the mountains in fearful grandeur. The Kaffirs, at a moment's notice, almost always throw themselves flat upon their stomach, burying their faces in the ground. They imagine, with a not unnatural spirit of reasoning, that they are safer in this attitude than standing erect, as lightning has often been known to prove fatal to many of them. Heavy rain accompanies the tempest, at first in massive drops, afterwards in a perfect deluge, when the severity of the storm has passed away. Torrents pour down the mountain sides into the plains, unchecked by obstacles, carrying with them the soil of the valleys, forming large swollen rivers, where there

had been no signs of such a thing before; and causing travelling to become very dangerous in the vicinity of these awful visitations. Close to where we took shelter we heard the roar of a lion, which added considerably to the terror of ourselves, and to that of the awe-stricken Kaffirs.

When the storm had passed over, everything looked refreshed; and the fresh air we breathed was grateful after the hours of prostrating heat we had previously endured. It is scarcely possible to conceive so great a contrast as that which we experienced.

The next day, while rambling about, we saw several ostriches, but only succeeded in capturing one large one, they were so excessively wild. It was the first we had shot. They are rarely met with in this part of Africa now, because they have been driven over the Drakenberg Mountains to the larger plains. The natives most ingeniously skinned it, and managed somehow or other to retain the best and handsomest feathers for themselves, as is usually the case, I am told, before these skins ever reach England. The chiefs greatly prize the long plumes, for decorating their heads, and set the greatest value upon those which are most pliable, and move with a breath of wind. There is a good market for them in Pietermaritzburg, where they command high prices.

With regard to the *Struthionidæ*, or, to speak more intelligibly, the birds of which the ostrich is the type, it should be understood that there are several kinds.

By the Struthionidæ are meant such birds as have wings not sufficiently developed for the purpose of flying. These may comprise, for what I know, other species besides those of the ostrich; but, looking at South Africa, it must be regarded especially as the birthplace of that which we understand by the word "ostrich." A geologist would give the reader information on the possibility of these birds existing in some analogous form centuries before the present formation of this globe. A naturalist would class them in a manner calculated to give order and distinction to each living form. I can only state what I believe to be the case, that the ostrich, of which I have seen so many, is found nowhere but in Africa, and the wilds of Syria or Arabia. The American ostrich, which inhabits La Plata, is another affair altogether. The Australian ostrich is known as the cassowary, or emu, and is common enough in this country, as it breeds rapidly, and is easily domesticated; for it is said to be less shy than ostriches generally, and to have allowed hunters to approach, especially when on horseback. There is one account of them, which I have heard, which stamps all of them of the same family and habit, more or less: that of laying their eggs, not singly nor apart from the community, but in common; selecting a large round hole in the hot sand to deposit them. In some cases I hear the males sit, and the females watch; in others, no incubation at all takes place, excepting in cold nights, and the young are hatched

by the heat of the atmosphere. I have been told that this is the case in the interior of the Natal coast, and I have no doubt it is so. I never heard the peculiar roar which is attributed to these birds; and should rather imagine that those travellers who have described it as like that of the lion, were nearer to the king of beasts than they thought for. If their roar be equal to their digestion, it must be truly awful. They are, however, becoming a subject of speculation in Natal; and it has been computed that a stud of ostriches, kept, tended, and periodically plucked, would be far more lucrative than a stud of racehorses, under equally favourable conditions.

CHAPTER VII.

The Dutch.—Kaffirs.—Treatment of Servants.—Missionaries.—Lion Hunt.—Snake-birds.—Vultures.

SOME Dutchmen came down to see us, who were anxious to purchase a gun ; but firearms were too precious, and very difficult articles to get, so we would not part with one. Many of those in use in the colony still retain their old flint locks. A tax is imposed upon every gun that is taken into the colony, as a means of preventing Kaffirs from becoming possessed of them. It is also requisite to take out a license to use one ; as well for the destruction of game as for other purposes.

These Dutchmen have a very sound notion of the advantages of education, and asked me to turn school-master, and teach their children English. They offered to remunerate me at the rate of £10 a month, which they said I might take out in cattle, should I prefer it. Having come out for sport and adventure, gratifying as was this compliment to my intellect, I declined the honour with thanks. These Boers appear to be particularly anxious to obtain Englishmen to instruct their children.

The life which would be led here, under ordinary circumstances, is about the wildest and most monotonous that it is possible to imagine; but should you happen to be a sportsman, then, on the contrary, it is teeming with excitement. I do not suppose there is a better game country in the world than this part of Africa; and at this time it was but little known or hunted by the white man.

The Dutchman, like the Kaffir, delights in his cattle; he loves their beauty, their excellence, their appearance, their condition. It seems almost his one and only thought of enjoyment; and he passes his time in counting and numbering his beasts, as any miser does his money. His principal refreshment consists of coffee and porridge, which he partakes of four times a day, together with onions. He frequently barter large handsome skins for coffee, as it will not grow in the north-western part of Natal.

I have observed that these people are always obliging to each other; and, like the patriarchs of old, have a fine dignified manner of asserting their own rights, and doing exactly as they please. They are firm with their Kaffirs, and, as a consequence, which is more or less the case with uncivilised labourers, or slaves, get a great deal of work out of them. I have found that these people require to be dealt with with a certain amount of tact, and, if well managed, they make excellent servants. But having certain, not very wild notions of justice themselves, they must be punctually

paid, and treated with civil firmness. Any other method than this ends in excessive inconvenience to both parties; for they will not only not work themselves, but go about informing all the Kaffirs in the neighbourhood how they have been ill-used; the consequence of which is that a bad master or manager has difficulty in obtaining labour at all.

It does not answer to do things by halves in this country any more than in our own. I know from experience that it is necessary in both to keep a promise. If, therefore, I threatened a Kaffir with a thrashing, I was particular in giving it to the minute; or, if I promised him a sovereign, I was equally so in paying him punctually. Had I once failed to keep my word they would have lost all confidence in me as a master or a disciplinarian, and would have imposed upon my kindness.

When an European wants a servant, he enters into an agreement, for a specified time, with a Kaffir magistrate, at the expiration of which period the man leaves to the hour. Should the fellow imagine that he has been treated justly and honourably by the employer, he will send a brother to take his place, who will enter likewise into the same sort of agreement. At the termination of his time he will also leave to the day, almost to the minute; and, like his predecessors, should he approve of his master, he will send another brother. If you will find brains and money, they will find energy and sinews to the end of the chapter.

Religion in this colony causes great excitement. The Bishop Colenso has many and great admirers; his highly gifted urbanity is likely to refine minds and gain him friends; whereas the poor, half-educated, half-starved missionary, or self-imposed labourer in the vineyard, previously to coming out to Natal, has, in most cases, seen little or nothing of the world. He knows nothing whatever, and is quite incapable of knowing anything of human nature, whether black or white. Ignorance, however, is a venial fault, and might be covered by sincerity, if these men were in all, or nearly all, cases true. They are, instead, the most jealous enemies of the hard-working English colonists, and endeavour to set the Kaffirs against them, by saying, that if they had been good men they would not have left their own country; often inferring that they have been driven out for their crimes. An implication of this kind makes an impression upon savage and unreflecting minds stronger even than upon our own. They act more readily upon probabilities than we; and this is, in my opinion, one reason why colonists do not get on as well as they should with the natives, who are naturally averse to entering upon commerce, or into social relations, with men who have nothing but a damaged reputation to offer as a guarantee for the honourable performance of their contracts. But if the missionary is of no service to his own countrymen, he is of still less to the Kaffir. He is in bad odour from a peculiar circumstance. No hospitality is shown him,

as a Kaffir looks down upon any Englishman who is paid for his work. It is a matter of deep regret to me to have to say that, personally, in all my wanderings amongst barbarians, I have never been able to discover any good seeds that a missionary is supposed to have sown. I believe a far greater amount of harm than good arises from the unfortunate prejudices and ignorance that so often accompany missionary labours. The converted Kaffir, amongst old colonists, is contemptuously called the "crystallised Kaffir." You may make up your mind, when you get a reformed and enlightened gentleman of this sort, that you will be thoroughly plundered, as he has all the plausibility of the hedgerow divine added to the natural cunning of the Kaffir.

We found the young Dutch Boers very agreeable fellows. They were particularly anxious that we should go and stay with them, which we agreed to do; and for this purpose we left our encampment in the care of an old Kaffir, and proceeded in company with them to their house, which was about twelve miles distant. It was a large residence, surrounded by an extensive orchard of standard peach trees, laden with splendid ripe fruit. We partook of some, which greatly refreshed us, being fatigued after a rough, hot ride across the plains. There were a number of young Dutch ladies here, and we got up a good dance in the evening. We could scarcely realise the fact that we were so many thousand miles from Europe. I have

observed that Dutch women born in this colony are for the most part fair, plump, and handsome.

A lion was the great topic of conversation; for we had received tidings that one of these noble beasts had been seen in the neighbourhood. Frequent consultations among us took place upon the best mode of trapping him, without coming to a decision; as no one ever thinks of exerting even his mind, or affecting hurry about anything. However important or exciting the subject may be, everything is taken in a listless, lethargic manner, possibly from that atmospheric pressure, which influences stranger and native in this part of Natal. In due course it was decided that we should start the following day to hunt this lion; accordingly, Dutchmen, Kaffirs, and ourselves, with a large number of dogs, left at an early hour for the lion "veldt," on which excursion we had the appearance of a small army. This was the first lion hunt at which I had been present; and a most exciting scene it proved to be. Kaffirs were despatched in all directions as scouts and outposts, each leading dogs; while we all made the best of our way, mounted upon horses, not less inspirited by the prospect of sport than ourselves, to the place where the king of the forest was supposed to be. We were becoming more and more eager every minute, and were talking excitedly to one another, when suddenly the tall reeds in front of us began to move and bend beneath some unseen weight. This made us fancy we had been too bold, though none

of the party suspected we were in such close proximity to the object of the chase as we really were. Scarcely had we espied this shaking of the reeds than our horses turned sharply round, and began to tremble violently. This extraordinary acuteness of the animal disclosed to us the true state of the case, and showed that we were right in our supposition. We retreated some few paces to ascertain what our bold foe's tactics would be. He did not leave us long in doubt; but, uttering a terrific roar, and seeing that he was surrounded on all sides, the king of beasts bolted into covert again. At this juncture some crackers were thrown into the jungle, which made him spring out; and the word "fire" was given along the line. He received a complete broadside of bullets, besides a volley of assagais, so over-anxious was every one to fire at him. Upon this unexpected attack he uttered another mighty roar, like the lion in *Bombastes Furioso*, made an attempt to spring once more on his assailants, failed in his effort, and rolled head over heels upon the ground. As soon as the Kaffirs felt certain the animal was helpless, they approached it; and finding him quite dead, although still warm, they lapped up his blood. They have a peculiar fancy that by so doing they will inherit its boldness. They immediately set to work to skin it; and when this was done it was carried home in triumph. It certainly was an enormous brute, and I regret not having taken its dimensions. It is marvellous to see the rapidity with which these natives

prepare skins. Before this lion had been dead an hour and a half, its hide was already dried, and the carcass devoured by vultures. As soon as the skin is stripped from the animal it is scraped and pegged to the ground, with the fur downwards. Left to the action of the sun, it dries in an incredibly short time.

A dispute arose in the evening as to whose bullet killed it; ultimately we drew lots, and so satisfied every one. A few days after we again went hunting, and succeeded in killing several animals, principally for their skins, in order to make a little money by them, and so render our trip as profitable as possible. This is an honest motive for the destruction of animal life.

Our peculiar method of settling the difference as to our individual prowess or capability in lion shooting reminds me of the same sort of decision in the case of woodcocks, which was always adopted by a friend of mine in England. Observing that whenever a woodcock rose in cover, on a certain property where they were very scarce, everybody within hail let off his gun, and claimed the honour of the day, he decreed that everybody within one hundred yards (a most generous limit), having a gun in his hand at the time, should go "odd man," or "toss up;" and that against the heads or tails of a halfpenny there should be no appeal whatever. The plan was approved of, and carried out for many years. It gave universal satisfaction, and was always accepted by the squire and proprietor of the

property without a question. It had one very great advantage : it did away with the numberless draughts upon our credulity, which had hitherto attended our shooting parties, and gave the worse shots a chance of distinguishing themselves once in the season.

Soon after this we lost ourselves for two whole days, rambling over the most inaccessible, wild, and rugged country, in endeavouring to discover the road which would take us back to our friends. Our efforts were of no avail, for the more we wandered the farther we appeared to be from the haunts of man. The whole country seemed but a habitation of wild beasts ; apparently they were the sole possessors of the land. A number of baboons first came across our path ; but, being in a very large body, we thought it most expedient not to be the aggressors in an attack. I could here narrate several curious things that I observed in connection with these animals ; so horribly like man that I am disposed to refrain more from the fear of throwing doubt upon my veracity in general than from any other cause. Unfortunately they were not endowed with the gift of speech. A human being we should have hailed with delight, to have set us upon our right path. We began to fancy we should starve, as the calls of hunger were gaining rapidly upon us ; and as the sun was nearly set, we were compelled to lie down and take our rest, without having partaken of any food that day. Throughout the night we were kept awake by the howling of hyenas and other animals. As

daylight dawned three very large baboons approached, upon which we fired, and knocked one over; the other two were so distressed at the loss of their comrade that they danced round about the dead body, making plaintive and painful cries, which can only be compared to those of a baby. Out of compassion we soon despatched the two mourners, and skinned them.

Twelve o'clock found us on our right track to rejoin our Dutch friends, and by sundown we were once more amongst them. They congratulated us upon our safe return, as they feared we had come to an untimely end. The fatted calf was killed in our honour, to which we did ample justice, and passed the evening in merry-making.

We went up a small river, an offshoot of the Tugela, near the Van Reenen pass. Each of us paddled a canoe, made of buffalo hides (a very frail craft), which we occasionally carried, as there was not always sufficient water to float it.

The river abounded in wild fowl, and we put up enormous flocks of them, consisting principally of teal, widgeon, and wild duck. In some parts the banks were lined with large white storks, and other members of the crane family; these birds destroy large numbers of snakes, and, as they prove useful to the Kaffir, he never kills them. We shot as many of the water fowl as we required, and took a fair number of eggs back to our Dutch friends. Fully a month was spent in this district, shooting wild fowl, varying it occasionally by

making excursions to the houses of Dutchmen, which lay scattered about, at wide intervals, all over the country.

The snake-bird is very interesting to watch. I have seen it soar high in the air, and suddenly pounce down upon a snake, bearing it up very swiftly, and not allowing the reptile time to twist itself round. When it is nearly dead the bird lets it fall, and devours it. I have seen large quantities of these up the river Ifafa, and noticed that when they attack a large snake they will constantly carry it up and drop it several times before they are able to kill and devour it. This is a sacred bird with the Kaffirs, as are the eagles.

There are great varieties of wild pigeons, which are very good for eating, and vary in size from a thrush to a common hen. The Dutch are great pigeon fanciers, and, consequently, keep up a continual war upon the falcon tribe.

I once witnessed an aërial fight between a large falcon and the silver-hawk, which is the smallest of South African hawks. This bird kept flying round and round, constantly striking the falcon under its wings. After a contest, which lasted nearly an hour, it proved itself the victor, by sending the big bird to the ground in a most distressed condition.

The vulture and falcon in South Africa are quite as common, without any exaggeration, as rooks and black-birds are in England; and where there are flocks of sheep they are a great pest to the farmer, as they

constantly attack young lambs, swooping at them, and plucking out their eyes.

The night-jar, or goatsucker, as it is sometimes termed, is common. It is similarly marked to an English woodcock; its flight is like that of the swallow; and it keeps its mouth perpetually open as it flies.

There is much more to be said about the birds of South Africa, which is rather the business of the ornithologist than of the traveller.

CHAPTER VIII.

A few Words on Missionary Labours.

IF I seem in my last chapter to have been unjustly severe on the missionaries, it must be remembered that the good intentions which promote missionary undertakings are not always carried out into missionary life. No praise could be too great for the man who leaves his home and his friends, his language, his habits of mind and body, to inculcate the highest truths among the heathen, if he be really leaving the amenities of civilisation for savage life, with a due appreciation of the accidents of both. But experience has told me that, at least in this part of the globe, many have left only one scene of toil and distress for another, which has had the inducement of novelty; or that they have been led by an ambition not commensurate with that holy ambition which carried their prototypes into so many quarters of the globe. The pioneers have penetrated far into the land, and have done good service by clearing the road; but my experience of social life in foreign lands has convinced me that they have not been followed by an army capable of profiting by their

exertions. Later ecclesiastical colonists have fallen away from their originals; and either the intentions are not so sustained, or the capacity for their practical fulfilment is wanting.

I believe it to be so, because the men whom I saw could have had no sort of moral or educational fitness for the work they had undertaken. But it must not be conceived that I am, on this account, blind to the history of noble missionary work which has been done under other circumstances, by properly organised staffs of clergymen. From the days of our liberation from the yoke of Romish superstition, and pre-eminently by the colonists who succeeded that schism, in the days of Raleigh, Hawkins, and Drake authorised missions have been an assistance to the colonist by inculcating obedience to law, and the beauty of moral obligation, on the untamed; at the same time that they strengthened the patriotism and loyalty of the colonists themselves, and confirmed, as well as spread, the faith as we held it at home.

In New Zealand, which differed in many respects from the early possessions of the Crown, we exercised no rights of sovereignty until 1839. At that time it is stated that the enormities committed by our convicts, who had escaped from Australia, were so frequent and so gross against the aborigines as to call loudly for our interference. This is not a parallel case with that of the country in which I have been travelling; but it exhibits a very remarkable contrast in mis-

sionary labour to that which I have touched upon in my last chapter, and therefore I adduce it. It is stated that "in establishing his government (that of New Zealand) Captain Hobson availed himself of the assistance of the missionaries; and to their influence with the natives is mainly owing the facility with which the settlement of the infant colony was effected." Such is the account addressed by the bishop to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. We can easily imagine that such was the case; but under what circumstances? The Church Missionary Society had already done something as a pioneer, and the consequence was that a bishop, with his chaplains, one of whom, Mr. Cotton, was, like the bishop himself, a man of very distinguished talent and position in his own country, and accomplished in no ordinary sense of the word, found no great difficulty in establishing a success in Auckland. I say nothing about the present affairs of the same colony, nor of the injudicious interference, which, by some persons, is accused of being the origin of mischief. But I say that if, instead of these highly educated men, carrying with them whatever prestige is desirable for their purpose, there had appeared upon the scene illiterate, self-appointed labourers, unaccustomed to the amenities of life, which savages appreciate without practising—men of no tact, inelegant in their externals, and vulgar in their appearance, they would have fallen lamentably short of the three hundred candidates for confirmation from

among the natives, and would have very effectually disappointed the hopes of the governor in his efforts at conciliation.

Hear what a writer in 1613, whose words of wisdom I extract from a review upon this subject, in speaking of Whittaker, known as the "Apostle of Virginia," says in confirmation of my views. "I hereby let all men know that a *scholar*, a *graduate*, a *preacher*, well borne and friended in England; not in debt nor in disgrace, but competently provided for, and liked and beloved where he lived; not in want, but (for a scholar, and as these days be) *rich in possession*, and more in possibility; of himself, without any persuasion (but God's and his own heart's) did voluntarily leave his *warm nest*, and to the wonder of his kindred and amazement of them that knew him, undertake this hard, but, in my judgment, heroical resolution to go to Virginia, and helpe to brace the name of God unto the Gentiles." This is a charming picture of some missionaries who have had their reward in another world than this; but it is not the picture that usually presents itself to us in the interior of South or South-Eastern Africa. My experience of him among the Kaffirs, and the half-civilised tribes, their rivals or their friends, is that he is usually neither a scholar nor a graduate; but that, being unfriended, possibly in debt or in disgrace, not in rich possession, excepting of a wife and children, whom it is more true than polite to call an incumbrance, he has left a very cold corner

at home to feather a warm nest abroad. As I have already said, he is not scrupulous in his mode of accomplishing this object. He has been persuaded by no one and by nothing, but his own persuasion that, not being able to practise in himself the love, obedience, self-restraint, and patience which should be his, it is the next best thing to preach them to the heathen.

I have no experience in this country of a missionary such as early history has often painted him, or such as I can myself well desire that he should be. The true character of the men who first colonised the western world may not have been of a saintly character, and was disgraced by considerable cruelty, lawlessness, and bitter persecution; but the men who were employed to propagate the doctrines of their church, and to carry their forms of Christianity to the heathen, were at least enlightened and authorised ministers of the Gospel; and they added to these credentials of their mission fitness, tact, and knowledge of the world. Raleigh gave money for the planting the Christian religion in those countries which disappointed his hopes of well-organised colonisation, and the "preaching of the true word and observance of the due service of God, according to the rites and doctrines of the Church of England," was promoted in James's reign, "not only among the British colonists, but also as much as might be among the savages bordering upon them." But it was to be promoted not by a class of men only intent upon promoting themselves; and therefore, in its way.

but not by any means commensurately with its hopes and aspirations, it has prospered. The man appointed to the task "cleared," as it has been tritely expressed, "his own small space in the wilderness ; and when his own labours were closed by death he left no successors to improve the ground he had broken."

If England is earnest in her profession of making missionary labour go hand in hand with colonisation, if she wishes to improve the relations which must exist between civilised people or colonists, and those tribes that dwell on their borders, irregular traders in religion should be discouraged ; and all her energies concentrated on sending out the ablest as well as the most zealous of her labourers in the vineyard. It will be answered that "zeal not according to knowledge" is the only marketable article to be met with in these cases ; but it would not long remain so, if the encouragement given to learning and position were at all proportionate to their value. A gentleman among Irishmen, the most impulsive of our own people, is not more thoroughly appreciated, than a gentleman among the half-tamed tribes of South-eastern Africa ; and it is difficult to conceive the innate respect for good breeding and personal advantages among the aborigines. Those qualities, which would be found most attractive, are precisely those which are least cultivated ; and the vices which it is sought to cure cannot be remedied by men who do not begin by commanding an unreasoning obedience and respect.

The peculiar tone of the religion of Cromwell and his fanatical followers undoubtedly infected the early missionary labours, and the reaction of Charles's reign did not do much to change it. To the time of the revolution there was no sustained work done in this direction ; and although late years has produced some effect, where the well-ordered labours of an ecclesiastical staff has employed itself among the heathen, we have always placed our dependence upon a reed which is inadequate to sustain the weight of our obligations. If the right material, which frequently exists in the middle and lower classes, could be secured and trained and utilised, we should do well enough ; but uninstructed labour is in this case worse than useless ; and simple idleness would be better than active mischief. Mackenzie's is a great name in the interior of Africa ; but for one such name, and for one such disinterested follower of conscientious dictates, there are hundreds doing a work of which they know not the requirements, or, knowing them, are incapable of accepting the obligations. The combination of mental and bodily accomplishments requisite for successful missionary employment are found in but few men, and those usually the best born and the best educated ; and to entrust to the roughest hand the work which can only be performed by the master, is to mar the beauty of the material, and to create a loss, where we looked only for a gain.

I have said this much in apology for what may have

appeared a severe and unjust criticism upon a difficult undertaking ; and to show that I am not insensible to the good that has been done, and to the folly of attempting to do it with unfitting and unprepared tools.

CHAPTER IX.

Return to Pietermaritzburg.—My House on the Zwaart Kop.—Sausage-making.—Preparations for a Trip to Coast Country.—Oxen break away.—Attacked by Kaffirs.—Difficulties of getting Cattle through a River.—Lower Umlazi River.—Toads, &c.—Steep Mountain.—A Night at a White Settler's.

HAVING now passed a considerable length of time among the *flora* and *fauna* of the country, and in the society of our Dutch friends and their Kaffir neighbours, it became necessary that we should return towards Pietermaritzburg county. A three weeks' "trek" was before us, and we were sadly puzzled how to manage with our clothing, even on the score of decency, as it was literally dropping from our backs. It became requisite to sew up our coats almost daily. Our shirts hung together simply like rags, as the Kaffirs had washed them by beating them upon stones in the river; and the soles of our boots parted company with the upper leathers, stockings being a luxury which we had long discarded. In the way of clothes, but for the name of the thing, we had very little to recommend us beyond the aboriginal Kaffir himself. By the time we arrived at the Zwaart Kop,

which is a short distance from Pietermaritzburg, we presented the most dilapidated appearance possible.

If our appearance was against us, our spirits were not affected by it; and we occupied ourselves in returning much in the same manner as we had done in going up—I mean in hunting and shooting.

It was, however, high time that I turned my attention to home affairs. Upon reaching my house at the Zwaart Kop, I found it in a miserable state of filthiness and disorder. Nothing in it was fit for use. To speak only of the bed sheets; the Kaffir whom I had left in charge of everything, had cut a hole in the middle of them all to make long flowing robes for himself; and it will be hardly necessary to remark that they were no longer white, but had assumed a colour which is characteristic of the latitudes in which I was travelling. The honesty, which is another characteristic of Kaffir life, was, however, manifested throughout. Nothing had been removed from the house; and with the assistance of a broom and some water, I succeeded in getting it, and its furniture, tolerably clean. My first thought upon arriving was finance. It was as necessary in South Africa, as in the middle of Bond Street, to ascertain how my funds were. So I started without further delay, though with very unencouraging surmises, for the Natal Bank in Pietermaritzburg, to inquire how much I was worth. The inquiry was anything but satisfactory. I found there was but little on the right side of the book; and the mail with

my remittances had not yet arrived. This is an exceedingly awkward dilemma in any country, and not mended by the laws of debt in Natal. I therefore drew out what I had, and retired to my residence on the Zwaart Kop, which, if not the most dignified, was the honestest course to pursue. Here, in order to keep up those appearances which my respect for civilisation prompted, no less than to keep body and soul together, I proceeded to manufacture sausages. The confession is humiliating; but who can account for the vagaries of remittances? Pigs I purchased of some Kaffirs in the neighbourhood, which I killed, cleaned, cut up, and made into sausages myself. My man Joe, and my other Kaffir, used to take them into Pietermaritzburg to sell three times daily, so that there could be no mistake about their freshness, a great point with pork under an African temperature. Moreover they were savoury, being strongly flavoured with garlick; and thus found a ready sale at half-a-crown a pound. They went by the name of "Mrs. Hamilton's sausages;" and I may remark that, "by any other name they might have smelt as sweet." In the evening I frequently visited the town, and often recognised my own sausages at the tables of my unconscious friends. I was invariably asked whether I was any relation of *the* Mrs. Hamilton, the celebrated sausage-maker. Very few people knew that there was no Mrs. Hamilton, and that I manufactured them myself; for I kept the secret well, in the expectation of turning my

talents to account should the eccentricity of her Majesty's mails render further efforts necessary at a future time, or in another country.

Two of my English friends, as soon as they heard I was back again at the Zwaart Kop (for news travels incredibly fast amongst these people), came up to see me, and remained the night, notwithstanding the uncomfortable state of my domestic arrangements. It is fortunate that they were fond of pork in an artificial state.

Like most people who are fond of roaming and travelling in search of fresh objects of interest, I soon became tired of living upon the side of a mountain; so, after discussing the practicability of a "trek" with my friends, we agreed to make a trip on to the coast country, to take with us about one hundred and fifty head of cattle, and some casks of fresh butter, and to establish commercial relations upon the road with the wild Kaffirs, and at the American mission stations; and, as occasion offered, to amuse ourselves by sporting on the way.

We at once set off to Pietermaritzburg to procure a new outfit—not, as the reader will remember, before it had become necessary—together with all the necessary articles for "trekking." We succeeded in obtaining two commodious waggons, one of which we used for sleeping in, and the other for carrying articles of barter and our provisions. Our suite consisted of two Kaffir girls, three boys, and a Hottentot driver. We

also took with us some oxen for draught, and some horses for general work. When horses are first brought into this country they become weak and sickly, but when once acclimatised, they are most valuable and enduring, an opinion which is borne out by the present experience of the breeders of Pietermaritzburg and its neighbourhood.

Before leaving for the coast country, and while waiting for the necessary preparations prior to our journey, I went to pass the time with a Scotchman, whom I found to be a most amusing and intelligent companion. He proved to be of great service to me in the directions he gave me for my journey, as he had already been upon several surveying expeditions, and had acquired great knowledge, and many anecdotes of the country. He was at this time endeavouring to naturalise flax-seed; but it was in such a small quantity that I was not able to judge whether it would succeed or not. So interesting and agreeable was my visit here, that I much regretted that preparations were being made for our expedition. The bullocks, however, were purchased at a sale in Pietermaritzburg, together with some horses and provisions for use and barter. Four Kaffirs volunteered to go with us as drivers for the animals; and at length all the arrangements being completed, I took leave of my Scotch host, and taking two English friends with me, we commenced our journey.

The first discovery we made on setting out was by no

means a propitious one: some of the oxen had rinderpest, and dropped down dead at a very early stage of the proceedings. Not only was the actual inconvenience very great, but this loss of cattle rendered our expedition a very unsuccessful speculation. Nor was it only the sick or dying which caused us loss and inconvenience, for many animals, which were favoured with health when not working, broke loose and dispersed in all directions. It took us seven days to search for, and get them together again; and I shall never forget the rain that poured down day and night for more than forty-eight hours, soaking us to the skin. To add to the discomfort, we were compelled to lie down, without change of clothing, and take our rest in this drenched condition. One comfort remained to us; we were so fortunate as to have plenty to eat and drink, having laid in a good provision of stores in our waggon.

One night we managed to reach a white man's habitation, where we were able to enjoy an indoor fire. This was a rare luxury; and we brought our waggon close up to his house. The host having kindly lent us his cattle kraal, as fast as we recovered our animals, we were able to shut them up. After much loss of time and temper, having mustered all that remained to us from the pest, we started from the kraal, hoping to keep them in some sort of discipline. Soon we got into a forest of low scrub and stunted acacia, covered with strong thorn, interspersed here and there with a patch of coarse grass, where the cattle stopped to

graze, and again dispersed. I had now, however, thoroughly learnt the use of the whip, which I did not spare, and it had the effect of keeping them tolerably well together. This, and a lusty halloo, reduced them to obedience. While in this bush, two leopards passed close by us, which terrified our horses to such an extent that they turned sharply round and bolted.

As we approached the coast we found a new and dangerous phase of Kaffir life. The men were uncivil and treacherous. Four of these powerful fellows attacked me; and it was not until I had struggled and fought desperately with them that I succeeded in extricating myself from their grasp. I received a bad assagai wound on the back of my neck, which, however, did not deter me from going on my way. I put the spur freely into my horse, and used the butt-end of my whip unsparingly upon them.

Getting the cattle through the bush without any collateral obstacles was a very laborious process; but now a far greater impediment presented itself. A small river, which, upon inspection, we found to be deep and rapid, had to be traversed. To accomplish this in safety we set to work, and drove them as fast as possible. By these means we succeeded in getting all the animals over without any loss, though the difficulty and risk were great. Most of our oxen were young, and had not been put into yoke before; it therefore became necessary to thrash, drag, halloo at them, and use every effort before they could be induced

to make a move. Every one in our own country has seen the game of "follow my leader," as practised by sheep, and has probably admired the talent and energy with which a whole flock will overcome the difficulties of severe fencing, when led by a practised old hand. The cattle in South Africa are exactly like them in this respect; and our hopes centred in their powers of imitation. We had several older beasts, that were accustomed to the water, but they, unfortunately, required rest. It was, moreover, essential that these young oxen should be broken in to their work, as rivers are very numerous; and it is impossible to get over much ground without crossing one. Nearly four hours were occupied before we reached the opposite side. Now patience is one of those virtues which should form the staple commodity of any one proposing to rough it in Kaffirland; and I believe that habit has endowed me with an excellence of which I may not naturally have been possessed. Still, it was provoking to see valuable time wasted in efforts, which, but for the collapsed condition of our older beasts, might have been reduced by seven-eighths in consumption. It is but a poor, though, practically, a certain recompense, to reflect that the first step in training has been got through; and any one in the old country, who has been hung up on the road by the indocility of a young horse, on an important journey, is apt to arrive at one of two conclusions: either to ride broken horses for the future, or to take some other opportunity of teaching

them manners than that on which they ought to be progressing. It was a determination upon which I entered more than once in my adventures.

The native Zulu cattle are considered the best for labour; their power of endurance is great, and they are "plucky" in their work. They are extremely pretty; about the size of the common Alderney breed, and somewhat similar to that in appearance. The Dutch cattle are not good beasts of draught. To return, however, literally, to our "mutton." Our store of fresh meat was quite exhausted (a not uncommon state of things), and we had had bad luck in obtaining game; we therefore sought the nearest kraal, and there we demanded three chickens, which request the Kaffir woman refused to comply with. My rule always, at that time, was one, which much observation and travel, with some sacrifice of early opinion to modern *convenances* has modified, that no white man ought to starve when a black man can supply his wants. Seeing a fine old cock strutting about, I made no further ado, but knocked him over; upon which the old lady, seeing at a glance that I was determined to have food, despatched about twenty piccaninies to catch two more. Decision, in dealing with these natives, should be the order of the day.

There can be no doubt that some apology is due to the reader, if not to the negro, for the very bold remark (to say the least of it) which I have just made. There is something atrocious in the notion that the colour of

the skin, or the circumstance of being born under a cold sky instead of a warm one, should, in the abstract, give one the right to impose burdens upon, or in any way to oppress, a fellow-creature. It must always be remembered that it is not so very many years ago that this liberal admission of fellowship was first allowed; and that, if I have erred, I have done so in remarkably good company,—if, at least, our own conduct as a nation be taken into consideration, in connection with the management of some millions of coloured people. I am not now pretending to defend an untenable position; but I am pleading as an excuse the effects of education and example upon a somewhat untutored mind. I am aware that beings who have the same wants, and the same social relations as ourselves, and who are actuated by the same passions and appetites as the European, against whom nothing, as a matter of argument, can be urged, but that their methods of life, and dress, and the gratification of their feelings, are more direct and more practical than our own, ought to awaken sympathy rather than animosity, and might claim protection where they have been met by policy. But I must also urge that in dealing with the black man, as I have seen him, when it becomes a matter of life or death, the last appeal must be made to his fears; and as, in a state of nature, you have very little to expect from what is called his “sentiments of natural obligation,” you will find that it saves time to make your last appeal first. The theories that have been expended

upon this subject are as fine as they are endless; but the best answer to them all is to be obtained from those who have had practical experience of the difficulty. Allow the black man to see that you want something, for which you are not prepared to go to war, he will cheat you, outwit you, and, if well assured of his power to do so, he will withhold from you what is your right; but make him understand at once that you are not to be trifled with, and you will probably get what you want, and something beyond it. This knowledge of his character makes tyrants of us all.

India affords us a tolerable example of the justice that should be exercised towards a coloured population. Alexander conquered a part of it, Seleucus followed him to the Ganges. The Romans are said to have paid honestly for what they took, which is against my theory, as illustrated by the episode of the three chickens; but we Europeans—Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English—changed all that. When we were not warring against colour, religion furnished a pretext for annexation. When we meant to be honest to the black man, we were so only partially. Privilege is a mild term for something anomalously acquired. We acquired privileges from the natives, and successfully improved them to rights, which were so like wrongs that both sides looked alike. A permission to collect revenue is another specious title for demanding "black mail." Sometimes, you know, the Dewannee, or permission to collect revenue, was contrary to the

wishes of the reigning sovereign. But the reigning sovereign, like the old woman, was compelled to submit to a superior power. So John Bull acquired the management of a province; and promised to pay £300,000 to Shah Alum. But, of course, he forfeited it when Indian affairs rendered it necessary that he should do so. Some historians say that Lord Clive took what he wanted, though it was not for himself, but for a friend; which makes his conduct doubly disinterested, but doubly tyrannical. Warren Hastings did not escape censure; and it was said that though he learnt the language of the natives, he never listened to it. There are some odd stories told about the coloured population of the Jamaica insurrectionists. I am afraid there may be some truth in them; but I am neither inclined to defend them, nor to believe them all; only it proves that my apology for my prejudices is a legitimate one; and that if I had taken three millions instead of three chickens I might have been a hero instead of a Bohemian. I am the son of these worthies, their blood flows in my veins, their prejudices warm my heart, their traditions have been handed down to me; and if I had left a record that "no white man ought to starve when a black man can supply his wants," I must have shared the obloquy which will now rest on far greater names, and shoulders more able to bear it. But I got my chickens, and was most thankful to the sentiments that procured them.

Having partaken of a hearty meal, we continued our

“trek,” and without further difficulty arrived at the lower Umlazi river. In this locality toads and frogs are of an unusually large size; these reptiles, like the frogs in the South of France, but without their excuse for it, made one continuous, uneuphonious chorus; so loud was it we could scarcely hear ourselves speak. Some of these toads, particularly one kind, called the monster-toad, are of a deadly poisonous nature. Horses will shy at them, as they do at a wild beast or snake; and if I could quite believe in their instinct in this matter, I should regard them as invaluable, and hope to train them some day to distinguish mushrooms from fungi.

Apropos of the instinct of horses, I am reminded of a good story, which may be in print, but I have never seen it. A clever dealer, on a clever cob, informed a not very clever purchaser that the animal in question, among other high qualities, was an excellent “pointer” at hares. A trial was easy enough; and, as the dealer himself had a quick eye for “puss in her form,” he was not long before he descried one. A touch of the heel did the rest, and the pony stopped as dead as if he had been shot. “There’s a hare somewhere about here,” said our friend; and it will not surprise anyone that in a few seconds she jumped up before the greyhounds, and was run into. Here was a marvellous instance of misplaced instinct; and what a prize! A horse and dog all in one. A bargain was concluded, upon advantageous terms to the dealer, and the cob changed

hands. Now the cob had a fault, although he pointed hares; and it was that, at water, just as our horses at toads and frogs, he was a little shy; in fact, came to so sudden a halt that an infirm rider hesitated between going over his head, or sitting where he was. On the way home it was necessary to cross a bridge, between the rails of which the animal, catching sight of the water, came to so dead a stop as to shoot his new purchaser unpleasantly near to what sporting men call "the horns." "Bless me," said the old gentleman, "what's the matter now? Why, he shies!" "Shy," replied the dealer, "shy; not he. 'Gad, I know what it is! There goes the trout. Dash my wig, if he don't point trout too!" Now my horse was not as good as that; but he knew the toads and reptiles when he *saw* them, and was infallible at the poisonous monster.

We made preparations for ascending a very steep mountain, with almost perpendicular sides. There was immense difficulty in getting the oxen up this, and we were occupied two days and two nights, with our usual labours, before we gained its summit. When there, we found ourselves upon a magnificent table-land, whence we had a most extensive view; the eye ranging over an expanse of country of from seventy to eighty miles, which was bounded by the bold outline of the Drakenberg mountains.

Two white settlers, being attracted by the size of our caravan, came to see what it contained; finding there was some fresh butter, they became very civil, and

invited us to their house, which was only remarkable for its extreme warmth and filthiness. Butter is as well understood, metaphorically, in Kaffirland as with us. In the morning we were awoke by a scratching and shaking over head; upon looking up we found it to proceed from a hen-roost; and the fowls were amusing themselves by cleaning their plumage, and putting themselves into order for the day's amusement or occupations. A cackling of geese from a near cupboard gave notice to their master that it was time for their release; and no sooner were they out than we joined them in the river. Freedom from attacks, which are not to be wondered at, considering our proximity to the hen-roost, is a luxury only to be enjoyed while in the water; we therefore remained in it some time.

It may be worth while to mention that I have seen pigs so infested with fleas that they have died from the effects of them; and it may not be commonly known that the bots on a horse's skin are not seldom the effect of the same cause.

Our cattle requiring rest, and the pasturage being very good, we remained where we were for three days.

We visited several wild Kaffirs while in this neighbourhood. Many of the younger ones had never seen a white man before; and, generally speaking, not to impugn the hospitality of nature's gentlemen, we were badly received. When I perceived a neglect of civility, I usually shot a dog with my revolver, to illustrate that they also might suffer in the same manner should they

proceed to extremities, which might tend to a recurrence of my previous prejudices. Fortunately for both parties, they stopped short of personal insult or attack. A gentlemanly-looking fellow came up to the house where we were stopping, to purchase a large jar of white rum, a very intoxicating spirit made from the sugar-cane. Seeing we were fresh arrivals, he invited us to go and see him the following day. Professionally it became necessary that we should do so, as this gentleman became so intoxicated as to bring on an attack of delirium-tremens. We were obliged to put him in his own waggon and drive him home. Crossing a river, one of the wheels ran over a large boulder, which caused the vehicle to topple over; in a word, we upset our tipsy friend. Out he tumbled, into the water, together with his purchase of rum; and it was with the greatest difficulty we managed to pick the almost insensible fellow up again. The ducking, however, somewhat tended to sober him. We had not proceeded far on the other side (for misfortunes never come singly) before one of the wheels of his waggon came off. It was a very old and bad one, and it took us several hours to put it together again in the absence of proper implements at hand; and the result of his drunken frolic was that we were compelled to outspan for the night.

The next day brought us to his little cottage. It was a true picture of Kaffir misery. His poor wife, apparently half a Hottentot, and two wretched children,

who wore no clothing but a grass hat upon their heads, came out to ascertain what was the matter. We had considerable difficulty in explaining the case, and still more in curing it. It was absolutely necessary to knock him down once or twice, to make him comprehend that he must behave himself decently. The unfortunate wife, as is too often the case in civilised life, at length managed to get him back ; but she did not evince the slightest gratitude, and laid all the blame upon us ; why, I never could understand, as we were all perfectly sober ; unless it was that one of her numerous duties might have been to transfer her husband's peccadillos to innocent shoulders, without reference to probabilities ; and she acted according to her light. Disgusted with our friend's inclination for the bottle, and with the manifest injustice of the Hottentot Venus to whom he had allied himself, we turned on our heels, and were glad to retrace our steps to our very homely, I may almost add dirty quarters, with the white settlers.

CHAPTER X.

Capital.—Snakes.—Ilovo River.—Alligator.—Fresh Arrivals.—Im-booboo.—Sugar Cultivation.—Pig Hunting.—Visit to a Chief.—American Missionaries.—Umkomanzi River.—Fish.—Murder and Suicide by a Sidar.—Coolies.

THERE is no country in the world that in my opinion would better repay the employment of capital than that part of South Africa of which I have been writing. The great mistake that has been made, and that is likely to be made, is the employment of insufficient means for the attainment of a purpose. The beauty, the natural fertility of the country, the capacity of the natives for work, its rivers, its game, and the usual accompaniments of warmth and sunshine, give it an appearance of such productiveness, that the first impression is too readily acted on; and an idea becomes prevalent that the soil may be well worked at a trifling outlay. Such, however, is not really the case.

There can be no doubt that it is beautiful, in parts beyond description; and that it presents a natural fertility of soil to the eye, which is very tempting. But it must be remembered that its very beauties, its irregularities, its ravines, its rivers, its bush, its timber,

its wildness and luxuriance of growth—all evidences of natural capability—are so many obstacles to the immediate cultivation or development of its resources upon a small capital. Rivers may be full of fish, the fields covered with rank-growing herbage and shrubs, but if you have no hands to fish the one or to turn up the other, excepting such as chance labour offers to you, you may well suppose that a strong inducement is necessary to make the most of your settlement. And what is that strong inducement but capital? You want money to raise the wages of labour to such an extent that what is at first entirely precarious should become dependent upon necessity. It is very difficult to see through this state of things, because this very fertility of soil, and facility of life, is open to the servant as to the master; and the native African has not yet been taught that man was sent into the world to work as a duty; and that if the master does it with his head, he must do it with his hands.

There is one thing to be said, however; living costs little or nothing in itself for the man who is able to shoot for his breakfast, or hunt for his dinner. Absolute starvation to the man who can handle a gun or a fishing-rod is out of the question. Game is not only abundant, but not yet wild as far as the smaller sorts are concerned; though, as will be seen, the larger sorts have beaten a gradual retreat before the advancing foot of man. And labour can be had to any amount, but it must be paid for; and as the cultivation of the

land advances, the *auri sacra fames* advances with it, and the small capitalist will find himself hung up just as the most important part of his work is about to be completed; and another will step in, and profit by his energy and brains. Labour is cheap where living is cheap; and where there is nothing to purchase a little money goes a long way. But that sort of labour is not very serviceable to the European, who has a different notion of things in general to his African-bred neighbour, and requires that his servant shall at least be regular, obedient, and consistent; the very virtues of which he seems least to be possessed. He is regular only so long as it suits his caprice to be so; he is obedient as long as his fears predominate over his pride; and he is consistent only in acting upon the impulses of the moment, and in throwing up his work as soon as it becomes irksome. In this country, nay, in any country where tin tacks or brass-headed nails is the circulating medium, capital is the only thing which would eventually remedy these defects; the introduction of regular labour would increase necessities with civilisation; a bare sustenance even on salmon and partridges would become unfashionable; glass beads and a cocked hat would give place to corduroy trousers and a fustian coat; razors would supplant broken panes of glass as a means of shaving the head or the chin; and the poor native would soon see the charms of that wealth which is destined eventually to destroy as many empires as it is fated to create.

Therefore, I say, let men of capital come out; for it is to their exertions that the colonist must look for a success which is denied to struggling poverty, unless under very exceptional circumstances.

To the larger capitalist the country holds out hopes of a very high character, for it is not one of those countries which must lie fallow, but which may return to the speculator a more than adequate remuneration within a very short time of his undertaking; while the cheapness of living during the early outlay, and the beauty of the climate, are in themselves inducements of a high order to give it a trial.

While I was staying with the white settlers whom I have mentioned a missionary came to try and purchase some oxen of us. He was a very shrewd person, with a knowledge of business and cattle, and wanted to give a bill at two months' date. We were not inclined to humour him, as we had too much respect for the Wesleyans to allow them to get into debt. Finding, after considerable higgling, that we would not do business for his paper money, he produced the hard cash, and proved himself a good judge by picking out the best oxen; after having had (what should have been more in his line than black cattle; I do not say sheep) a long discussion upon the wickedness of this world, we parted with his reverence, scarcely knowing whether he was a likely man to raise the tone of religious feeling with the colonists or the natives. The Kaffir has often told me that he cannot believe the

missionaries. Is it to be wondered at that his faith should be tried severely when so many men of different sects and minds come out to preach to him ; every one contradicting the others on some point of doctrine, and not a few of them differing equally in the tenor of their lives? He therefore sticks to his own religion, in the absence of any which can command his respect or comprehension. You want either intellectually great or practically good men as missionaries ; and these are the exceptions.

As we approached the coast the snakes became larger, and we saw a black imamba and two large pythons. The male measured twelve feet in length and the female nine ; they are very swift in their movements, and usually travel in couples ; their bite, being certain death, causes them to be much dreaded.

There is the same reason for believing in the electrical powers of the snake as in the electricity of the eel ; and I have myself seen and experienced the effects of both of them. I have seen the latter clinging round a horse's leg in clusters when crossing a river, making the poor animal powerless ; and I have had them entwined round my own legs on similar occasions, and have been so encumbered by their bonds as to have been obliged to solicit the assistance of Kaffirs to get me through the water.

Every turn of the road, as we wandered on, became more and more beautiful, combining all the greatest features of a magnificent landscape. We could not

help exclaiming upon the sublimity of the prospects which opened upon us as we advanced. On one side was an overhanging forest, on the other a tremendous kloof. As we ascended the sides of the mountain we observed large birds of prey floating in the air below us. The sweet-scented jessamine, which grew from the fissures of the rock overhanging our path, filled the air with fragrance; while the lovely river Ilovo, flowing beneath us, made us fancy that we were in some distant Utopia, until the coiling smoke from an European house recalled us to the fact and the purpose of our journey; and the necessities of a hard life have convinced me that an Utopia will be none the worse for food and shelter. Amongst other things I was much struck with the splendour and luxuriant growth of the cactus; and it is not a great exaggeration to say that occasionally I have met with it as high as an English oak.

The birds of this part of Africa are especially beautiful, and of very varied plumage. The bright blues and greens predominate, as they are principally of the jay family.

We descended after a while, and reached the banks of the Ilovo by moonlight. On the opposite side an Englishman and his wife, with six little girls, resided. They hallooed us from the other side. The woman canoed herself across to ask whether we required any accommodation, or washing done, which we did, and took up our quarters with her during our stay, when she narrated all the movements of the white men of that

neighbourhood. Oral information stands, in the wilds of Natal, in the stead of newspapers.

The richness and fertility of the soil on the banks of the Ilovo surpass all my experience of other countries, and, indeed, all comprehension ; and it is reserved by the Natal Government for their own use. I made an excursion up this fine river, in search of our usual sport and adventure, and had the good fortune to fall in with an alligator, which we found basking upon the banks. After a long fight (for it is a most difficult reptile to kill) we succeeded in despatching it. The extreme wildness of these rivers, producing a feeling of loneliness and a mysterious fear of the unknown, made me cautious not to be too far from the waggon or encampment when the sun went down.

There is no absolute danger to be feared, except in losing the way, in which case the traveller might be subject to the inconvenience of sleeping in the forest. Under these circumstances a fire is the usual protection against wild beasts and reptiles, though but little so against the latter. Of these I have said that the poisonous imamba is the most to be dreaded. Alligators are formidable only in their own element, and are so surrounded by natural defences as to make an open attack difficult. They have very much broader heads than the true crocodile, but in other respects resemble them. When attacked they defend themselves with their huge mouths and tails, the blow of which latter will knock down a strong man. They can be killed by

the harpoon; but, if shot, must be so in the eye, or beneath the flanks, where they are alone vulnerable. They sometimes, but seldom, attack men; but devour dogs and pigs, and have been known to take young children. Very occasional instances have been recorded of their destruction of human beings while bathing or crossing a river; and at night, in pursuit of their prey, their bull-like bellowings are heard at some distance.

We heard that the Umzinto races were to take place in a fortnight, and as they formed the great topic of conversation among the settlers whom we met, and had a more purely English sound than any sport with which we had been made acquainted since our arrival, I made up my mind, if possible, to be present at them. While we were here there were some fresh arrivals from the coast, including two middle-aged ladies. These presented the appearance of living corpses; which, I believe, was chiefly owing to their constant alarm during the night, and great fatigue during the day. They were very thankful to reach this house, which appeared like a city of refuge; and our good hostess made them as comfortable as she was able.

Whatever may be thought of moderate music in England, and I confess to my indifference to those after-dinner performances, which are usually out of tune, and always out of place, it is but right to record my gratitude for the concertina which one of the party had with her. It was a bond of union, if it was nothing else; and produced a harmony among us,

which the mere fact of accidental intercourse would never have created. We ate, we drank, we made excursions, and killed game, as Englishmen always do when they can; and when we assembled in the evening we sat down and listened to the same music, and sang the same songs. It relieved the monotony of a sportsman's conversation, made the evening pass socially and quickly, and taught us to forget the troubles and anxieties which very properly beset the adventurer, and without which he would cease to be a hero even to himself.

Among other wild fowl, of which we saw a variety in this beautiful country, we shot a bird called the Imbooboo, which is very nice eating, and gives good sport; the peculiarity of these birds is that they live on the water all day, and roost on the cactus tree at night. The instinct which induces this amphibious sort of existence is one which tells them where they are safe from snakes, as they are not able to climb these trees. A leopard, too, among the ground game, was prowling about near us, as we heard from its constant roar; but we were unable to get at him, or, indeed, to see anything of him, notwithstanding a very sharp look out.

Upon leaving the Ilovo we came into a sugar-growing district, where the growth of the cane was so luxuriant that we had the utmost difficulty in keeping our cattle out of it; and the natives yelled from fear of having it trampled down. We managed, with considerable difficulty, to save their crop; and went from

here to the Umkomanzi river, where there was a larger number of plantations than in the district we left behind us. The sugar-cane grows here better than it does in Brazil, and is cheaper of cultivation. This arises from the fact that Kaffir labour is exceedingly plentiful. If sugar could only be conveyed to D'Urban at a less cost for exportation than it now is, I believe the present expense of growing it would be in the two countries about equal. Some attempts to grow coffee had also been made in this district; but the plant is delicate to rear, and not to be compared to the facility of its culture in Brazil, where, from the peculiar nature of the soil, and the adaptability of it to the climate, I have seen it produced without apparently the least trouble, and with scarcely any expense whatever.

The *Saccharum*, or sugar-cane—for I am not speaking of the manufacture, but only of the growth and cultivation of sugar—seems to have been better known in the north of Africa than in the south and west. Greek and Roman writers speak of it as a product of certain parts of India and Arabia. The Crusaders are said to have found it in Syria, and to have introduced it into Europe. It was brought by the Portuguese to Madeira, and by the Spanish to the Canaries. In fact, its transportation to America and the West Indies was later than its introduction to Africa. Information for its extraction was obtained from Brazil, and Brazilian sugar obtained a high reputation in Europe. I do not

know whether the natives of Southern and Western Africa have adopted the plan which is so profitable in the West Indies—that of raising several crops successively from the same roots. The process is, I believe, equivalent to the layering of carnations in our own country; and in a climate such as this, and under favourable circumstances, I see no reason why the Kaffir should not drive a most lucrative trade. There is always here a difficulty as regards transport for embarkation; and this is precisely one of those cases which I had in view when I spoke of the certain advantage of a large capital to begin with. The method of separating the sugar from the cane would doubtless be very imperfect. But, like other persons, the Kaffir would live and learn when his personal interests were concerned; and were I writing seriously, and with more experience of colonisation, and the purposes of emigration, I should feel inclined to make close investigations into the subject. However, without transport at a remunerative rate, sugar would be as useless as a means of national wealth as iron without coal. Coffee is said to have been brought originally from Abyssinia; there is no doubt that the climate of Arabia is favourable to an aroma unattainable elsewhere. A temperate atmosphere, excessive neither in heat nor drought, but varied by rains and a clear sky, is among the desirable conditions for the growth of the coffee shrub; and Kaffirland does not boast of moderation in that way.

XHearing that wild pigs (wart hogs) were in this locality, we made arrangements for a hunt, and tried to obtain some Kaffirs from the neighbourhood to assist in the chase. They did not regard it, however, in the same spirit as I did, so we contented ourselves with the assistance of the few natives who were in attendance upon us, and started early one morning for the place where the pigs were said to be. After beating about some time, and beginning to doubt whether we had not been deceived by our informants, we succeeded in putting up a fine bristly-backed old boar. He had large tusks, and was a most formidable looking subject in all respects. He gave us good sport, and an excellent run; and, after fruitless efforts to escape, by alternately bolting and charging, he finally fell in the open by a shot from my rifle. During the day we killed three smaller pigs—inglorious game!—and made ourselves ill with eating too much pork, which we devoured almost as soon as the animal was slain. The pigs had their revenge. The Kaffirs refused even to touch the pig, much less eat any of it, as they, like the Israelites, regard them as religiously unclean. They have the same feeling as regards fish; in fact, all that was considered unclean, and a great deal that was not, by the Mosaic law, is in like manner condemned by the Kaffir. Hunting, which Mr. Jorrocks is pleased to call the sport of kings and the image of war, kept us here some days; but we hoped to reach the Umzinto in time for the races—an ignoble con-

fession, but an honest ! The wild and dangerous game (leopards, wild cats, and occasional lions), which formerly was common in this country, is now very scarce. With the exception of alligators, and a few hippopotami, which are found in the vicinity of large rivers, where they bathe themselves in mud, and dry themselves in the sun, there is no large game to be found. Sometimes a leopard is heard of ; but they are gone farther inland, as a rule, in consequence of the increasing tide of population.

A Kaffir chief invited me to come to his house and see his daughters, saying they were very handsome. I complied with his request, but the beauties were not at home. One moonlight night, as I was returning from a visit to his hospitable board, about a hundred yards from me a fine leopard crossed my path. My horse turned round, shook as though it had the ague, and bolted back to the kraal ; this my friend, the inkose, with his natural superstition, looked upon as ominous. I explained to him, in his own language (for I had now acquired considerable knowledge of it), that I had visited angels, and, as a counterpoise, had seen the devil. He was as susceptible of the compliment as a minister at the court of Pekin, or a Belgravian mother of a marriageable daughter. He made me comfortable for the night, and the girls brought me outchualla and roasted sweet potatoes ; they attended to me in the most hospitable manner, and I did him the pleasure of sleeping there. Early the next morning we ascended a

hill commanding a view of a fine valley, and an American mission station, which was surrounded with large orange groves and mealy gardens. The American missionary had likewise large flocks of cattle, and everything indicated thrift and industry. These American missionaries I found more practical than the English: more men of the world, if not more self-serving. They bought some of our cattle in such an offhand, unsuspecting manner, that it was quite gratifying to deal with them; and we let them make their own selection, instead of picking out those we could best spare. We outspanned near this station for a few days, and sent some Kaffirs on to the Umkomanzi to inform the people that we were coming with cattle for sale. In fact, we felt there was no use in selling apples unless we cried them. Many people came to meet us on the road who were not such good judges as the American missionaries; and we parted with some of our beasts upon advantageous terms.

Our native attendants, who upon the whole were very docile and obedient, took charge of our waggons; and we told them where to outspan for the night, while we made a short, slow "trek," for the purpose of hunting. We were terribly disappointed with our excursion, for there was little else to be found than the ipiti buck, though of these there was a great abundance. We shot large numbers of these beautiful little animals, and looked forward to reaching the Umkomanzi river, where we could obtain a change of diet

in the way of fish, a delicacy we had not tasted for some time. The change of food, after a long "trek" is as beneficial to the health as it is pleasant to the taste. The country we were now travelling through was beautifully wooded, though less wild than that which we had left. In the distance were hills covered with tropical vegetation of every variety of hue on which an artist's eye could desire to rest. Through one of these varied masses of verdure I ascended, and upon gaining the summit, my eyes were gladdened by a splendid panorama. Sugar plantations, with the Umkomanzi flowing through them, and a forest in the rear—signs of civilisation which I always hailed with delight—added considerably to the beauty of the landscape.

Half way down this declivity was a charming little hotel; and here I stopped. The hostess prepared a comfortable meal of fish, fowl, and venison; and after sitting and enjoying it as I have scarcely ever enjoyed a meal before, we strolled down to the river, where all the white inhabitants came out to see us. Their first object, of course, was to hear our news; and the second, to tell theirs in return. The kindness of every one, which I was in an excellent humour to appreciate, was beyond measure; and, without more ado, we turned the oxen off, making up our minds to let them roam for a month.

No man enjoys idleness thoroughly until he has earned it by exertion; and certainly I was in a condi-

tion to pass at least the time I had proposed to myself in that purposeless sort of existence which constitutes real repose. What is called idleness, that is, mere abstinence from exertion, is but little to my taste; and I should at any time become tired of it in three days. But exercise without purpose, and taken up and laid down at will, is an enjoyment which I fully appreciate, and which the outspanning of our beasts clearly indicated as my settled intention. The nature of the country, its sunshine and shade, its luxuriant scenery, its soft and enervating influences, were all so many adjuncts to my contemplated pleasures, and I revelled in the idea of perfect independence as thoroughly as if I had suddenly become the possessor of untold wealth. But of all amusements it seemed to me that fishing would best answer my purpose. It combined the advantages of gentle relaxation without bodily toil, and with the gratification of my love for the picturesque. Seated in the canoes, which I purchased with the proceeds from the sale of my beasts, I and my hosts improved the occasion. We killed quantities of fish of various kinds and sizes, and so abundant is the supply, that if life could be supported upon fish alone, I should confidently recommend the banks of the river Umkomanzi as a sure and certain refuge to younger sons and literary men with large families. The latter, especially, might draw on their imagination for the benefit of their publishers without any more fear of contradiction than Mr. Spurgeon in his tabernacle, should they not

find the naked truth sufficiently attractive in these days of sensational writing. Many of these fish are of a very large size, and resemble salmon in their appearance and shape. The scale, however, is very much broader, and they bite so readily that I have hooked them not unfrequently with a common grub.

The only evidences of labour which I saw here were some sugar mills, larger than any I had seen in the coast country. About four hundred Kaffirs were employed in the culture; but with what degree of skill in their business I am unable to say. The means of transport was still against them; and I am of opinion that if a steam-tug could be brought up this river, it would prove a good investment. The cost of carrying the sugar to D'Urban, as I said before, is the great drawback to the profit that would otherwise be made.

Upon leaving the district, we promised to give our friends, who had treated us most hospitably, and enlivened our evenings with music and conversation, another call on our return.

The next day was principally devoted to selling the remainder of our butter. This we parted with at a very fair profit, only retaining one cask for our own consumption.

Murder and suicide are not the accidents only of civilised society; for the Kaffirs were in a great state of delight and excitement at the news of a double crime that had taken place in the neighbourhood. It

appeared that one of the Coolies, whom the Natal Government had imported into the country, to supply a demand for labour, had been missed some days from his work. I have a word or two to say on the subject of this Coolie importation, but we will first get through the details of an event which would have been worth a column and a half in the *Times*. Some Kaffirs, as they were passing a small hut, perceived a fearful smell. Their natural curiosity of course led them to peep, and there they beheld the following horrible sight. The wife of the unfortunate man was seen lying dead, with her three children, all having had their throats cut in a frightful manner; his animals had likewise met with the same fate, and were strewn indiscriminately about the hut. The Sidar himself was seated in a large dish, with his own throat cut. It was conjectured that this wretch had first murdered his family and destroyed his animals, then quietly placed himself in the dish, and finally put an end to his own existence. This disgusting spectacle seemed to amuse and delight the Kaffirs exceedingly. They were unmoved by any feeling of regret, as they never speak to the Coolies, and hold them in the greatest contempt. When the magistrate heard of it he ordered the Kaffirs to clear the bodies out of the hut; but they could not be persuaded to touch them, or even approach very near, it being, as I have before remarked, contrary to their superstitions, and, in this case, to their personal prejudices, to touch a dead body. They were then desired to set fire to the hut

and burn it to the ground, which they were not slow to do, even as it stood, bodies and all.

Coolies were brought from Calcutta, by an invitation from Government, because the Kaffirs, without rhyme or reason, occasionally take a dislike to their masters, and leave them suddenly in the midst of the sugar harvest. However necessary it may be to find consistent labour, I have no doubt in my own mind that the importation of them is doing great injury to the colony. Not only has it produced a great amount of jealousy and ill-feeling, but they have brought with them many virulent diseases, such as small-pox and scarlet and typhoid fevers, which had never been known in Natal before.

I believe, at the time of which I write there are about 5,000 Coolies in South-eastern Africa, but do not think the races will ever blend. The filth of these Indian villages is most offensive to the Kaffirs, who are as cleanly in all their arrangements as the Coolies are dirty and disagreeable.

CHAPTER XI.

Kaffir Magistrate.—Visit from a Settler.—How a Wife is punished.

AFTER leaving the Umkomanzi, we outspanned for the first night upon a large plain, about half a mile distant from the residence of Mr. M——, a Kaffir magistrate, who had been appointed by the Colonial Government, to rule over the Kaffir tribes of that district. The only force he had was one which, if singular to European notions of political pressure, was well calculated for carrying out his laws. It consisted of four native policemen and a large whipping-post, the terror of the backsliding, which is used for castigating Kaffirs who have run away from service, and committed other small crimes and social misdemeanours. Mr. M——'s residence was scarcely palatial, but strictly conventional, being a hut built exactly in the same style as those of the natives. Indeed, it was nothing more than two ordinary Kaffir-huts joined together, the luxury of a door allowing of a free passage from the one into the other. The arrangement was simple, and the furniture almost equally so; to the traveller they appeared very snug, and excited our envy, not to say our admiration. We wandered about the plain for

some distance, a part of which was covered with small hillocks, where we lost ourselves for some time in the dark. It was not without difficulty that we succeeded in regaining our waggon—a thing we certainly should not have done had we not been guided by the bark of our dogs, which were left chained up to the wheel. There was a settler in the neighbourhood of the name of Mackenzie, whom we discovered sitting by the fire, patiently awaiting our return. We were so much pleased to meet a fellow-countryman that we proceeded to testify our delight in the most common and intelligible manner; to make use of a colonial expression, more forcible than polished, for which I trust I shall be forgiven, we all “liquored up” in that compound which came most easily to hand. It was not water. The choice of liquor is not great here, and white rum is the prevalent drink. We remained chatting over the fire until morning, when it was thought to be time to take repose; the hints we gave were unintentional, but our new friend understood yawning sufficiently well to wish us good night at last, and when he left us we got into the waggon, and gave instructions to our driver and Kaffirs to continue the “trek.” The festivities of the night caused us to sleep very soundly, and we did not awake before eleven o’clock, when we found ourselves in full view of the Indian Ocean; the delicious breezes from the sea proved our best restorative, and in a few minutes the recollections of the white rum were effectually stamped out.

One of our Kaffirs ran to the sea-shore and procured a basket of oysters. From long abstinence, we regarded them as a great delicacy, I can assure you, of which we partook freely for "tiffin."

Here, again, on our approach to the coast, the usual difficulty met us. Game was scarce, and nothing could be found to supply the larder; and again the cattle broke away. This caused us all to become very irritable, and gave me and my servants a great deal of useless trouble and anxiety. I vowed twenty times never to be a drover any more; but, as this time they were soon recovered, I reconsidered my determination. After a time my course lay inland; and as we turned back from the sea we reached a small but very rapid river, called the Amahlangwa. The scenery here became exceedingly grand. Magnificent granite rocks and huge boulders overhung the river, covered with a fine tropical growth. The crossing, although not deep, was found to be dangerous, owing to the precipitous nature of its rocky sides. The ascent of these hills was a dreadful pull for the oxen. As we left the river behind us, and before we reached the brow, we came into a thick wood, most difficult to penetrate, the ground of which was covered with creepers, wait-a-bit thorns, and beautiful flowering plants. We hoped to reach a white man's hut that night, but finding it impossible to do so, we outspanned in the open; but I was getting used to that. Soon after daybreak the next morning we arose, and, on looking about, found

ourselves comparatively close to a Kaffir kraal, to which we paid a visit, where I learnt an incident worth quoting.

Kaffirs, in their conduct towards their wives, as a rule, are most impartial, never appearing to be fonder of one than of another. When a woman, therefore, creates a disturbance or quarrel with the other wives—which is of rare occurrence—the husband sends for his next brother to come and punish her in the following manner. The other women having been ordered out of the kraal, and the husband himself having likewise left it, the offender is tied to a stake, and receives a dozen lashes. She remains thus ignominiously bound until her husband returns home. Upon his reappearance she is released; and, falling upon her knees, thanks him for the punishment she has received, admits her wrong, and promises never to offend in like manner again. Unlike ourselves, the subject is never afterwards referred to.

The application of such a lesson as this is too obvious to need much comment. In the old-fashioned days of public-school flogging, a modest assimilation to this mode of punishment was practised, inasmuch as only certain times and places were consecrated to the application of the birch. At all events, no unseemly ebullition of temper was allowed to nerve the arm, but the administration of punishment was as cold and unimpassioned as the conviction of a Brutus. The Kaffir chief or husband goes a step beyond this. He does

not venture even upon the infliction of the chastisement with his own hand—a self-restraint too great for the Keats, the Longleys, and the Butlers, bishops and scholars as they were. No! the Kaffir declines temptation; and lest he should be induced to allow the interference of temper with the dictates of pure justice, he transfers the honours of the execution to the nearest of kin. The mode of that execution smacks of the savage, but the penitence and the docility of the smitten wife reads a lesson much wanted in civilized society. There is no calling in of official interference to restrain the chastening arm for the future; but a self-condemnatory cry appeals to the husband for the return of that portion of his love and homage which belongs to her. Upon the acknowledgment of his rights and her own transgression, she is received once more into favour; and—mark the sequel!—nothing more is ever afterwards heard of the business. What a lesson for us! Why, half the quarrels that arise in this world between man and wife are the results of injudicious recrimination. What happened before is always a peg in civilised society on which to hang present complaints. People never forget, though they sometimes forgive. Here the poor Kaffirs preach us practically a sermon on a text that bishops fear to approach; and teach us a virtue in polygamy that is seldom exercised by, or towards, the husband of one wife.

CHAPTER XII.

The Umzinto.—Emigration and Settlers.—An Indian Village.—
Umzinto Races.—Oysters.—Crocodiles.—Fight with Eagles.—
Pig hunt.—Leopard hunt.—Chilies.—Hunting the Buffalo.—
A Rhinoceros fight.

FROM this point we made a trek inland, travelling with tolerable ease and rapidity, during which time nothing worthy of note occurred. It was not long before we crossed the Umpambinyoni river, and found ourselves in the Umzinto country.

Mr. W——, an Englishman, hearing of our approach, came out, with a hospitality which is almost without any exception in this country, to meet us on the road; and brought with him fresh horses for our use, which were very acceptable. At the same time he offered to put us up for the night, with our wearied beasts—an invitation we gladly availed ourselves of. Acting upon the hint, and fearing lest we might lose one moment of the pleasure, we left our waggon to follow; hurrying on to get to his house, we reached it by sundown, and congratulated ourselves warmly on our escape from another night in the open.

Mr. W—— has a pretty house, luxuriously furnished for a colonist; and, amongst other things, I observed a pianoforte, which was, at that time, the only one that had been brought to this part of Africa. I here slept in a bed too, which I well remember to have been the first comfortable one I had had the luck of getting into since leaving England. Next to the man who invented sleep, I began to think the man who invented beds to take it in, deserved the highest commendation.

Among other tastes of a like nature, our host was a great pigeon fancier; and he had many varieties, with which he took great pains in breeding. The mills belonging to the Umzinto Sugar Company, of which he was the manager, were very productive; and to me a source of great interest. In them a large number of natives were employed; and the plantations, which were extensive, enabled the natives to find something to do almost the whole of the year round.

I cannot help recurring to the subject which I have before touched upon; as I here had an opportunity of improving my acquaintance with it, and of confirming my previous impressions of its value to South-Eastern Africa.

Sugar, I believe, might become the staple of Natal commerce. It cannot be cultivated to a great profit, in my opinion, further inland than five miles; at that point the cane grows finer than in any other country I have visited. I give this opinion only for what it is worth, simply as the opinion of a close inquirer into

the question, without knowledge. In the island of Mauritius, although the Mauritians laughed at me for saying so, I found the cane did not germinate so luxuriantly as in Natal; and the cost of labour is much cheaper in the latter colony. The plantations in the Mauritius have suffered materially from a fatal disease in the cane, caused by a fly, as some think, or they are gradually becoming worn out, owing to the exhaustive powers of the cane; from 1847 to 1848 a vast change had taken place in the amount imported. In many instances, too, I remarked that, notwithstanding the lapse of time, and the introduction of a new species of cane from Ceylon, guano was used, which is quite needless in the rich soil of the maiden forests of Natal. I ascertained from my present host that the cane is planted on the stubbed woodland, which soil is exceedingly rich; and that there is not so much difficulty in clearing these forests as appears at first sight to be the case, in consequence of the growth of the roots of the trees being near the surface of the ground. They are thus disposed to spread themselves out in every direction, as far as they find room, instead of growing deep in the earth, and plunging with their usual tenacity. The process of eradication thus becomes comparatively easy. I have ascertained that it usually costs £2 sterling to the acre to have the ground cleared; at least, that was the expense three years ago. The cane is easily planted, and the noxious weeds are kept down by the employment of Kaffir labour, to a certain

extent. They seldom make any head against industry; and when once the cane has fairly taken root it stifles many of the weeds itself.

In selecting and taking a sugar plantation, it behoves a man first to build up a suitable hut, with the full intention of residing there, and awaiting with patience the returns for his outlay. This, I am sorry to say, very few men can make up their minds to do. I have both seen and heard of many, who, having just managed to bring their crop to perfection, but not having sufficient patience, or self-denial, or, perhaps, capital, have had to make a journey to D'Urban or Pietermaritzburg. There they enjoy facilities for living comfortably, seeing society, and for borrowing money at a very heavy and ruinous per centage, for which bills are given on their plantations; and when the system commences, few instances are on record of a colonist with sufficient industry or economy to free himself from his bonds. If three men of active, energetic habits, and of average health and education, were to make up their minds to leave England and settle in this colony, each bringing with him a sum of about £1,000 sterling, and depositing the money at the Natal Bank, they would start with a fair chance of success. They would get 10 per cent. for money (unless some exceptional or unforeseen circumstances should occur), which would be amply sufficient for them to live upon, until they had thoroughly made themselves acquainted with the minutest details of colonial life, and the culture of the sugar-cane. The

next step would be to procure the necessary machinery from England, and to set up their tent as planters. I believe such men, with ordinary prudence, would reap an adequate return for their outlay of labour, time, and capital; but, from my experience, I do not think this scheme would be of any avail, unless the three persons were satisfied of their powers of self-control, of mutual concession and good humour, ready to bear and forbear; and, above all, unless they possessed the moral strength to abstain from all strong drink, ardent spirits, and intemperance and excesses of every kind. This is a vice into which many new colonists fall, in consequence of the debilitating effects of the climate upon the constitution before they become acclimatised, when the occasional stimulant has become a habit. I have observed that they take brandy for support, at all hours and upon all excuses, whether of company or solitude, frequently mixing with it cayenne pepper, in order to make it stronger. The reaction upon the nerves may be more easily conceived than described; nor will any one be much surprised that the lives led by these men are but little calculated to promote their temporal and social interests, and causing irritable temperaments utterly to break down. One great disadvantage I can foresee, that an habitual drunkard would find great difficulty in getting Kaffirs to work for him for any length of time, as they have an almost universal dread of this vice, and thoroughly despise the man who is incapable of bearing with patience

the ills of life or climate without the assistance of stimulants.

While on the subject, I may as well say that there is a mistake made by many Englishmen in an injudicious frankness towards their companions on board ship on the journey out. Young men, especially, are too fond of telling what they do and what they do not possess; and are as candid about their plans and intentions, their hopes and wishes, as if they had been with their dearest friends. The consequence is, that, as soon as they land, all sorts of plausible people beset them, and fill their heads with various wonderful investments for their capital; and when they have allowed themselves to be cajoled into parting with money, they seldom, if ever, see their friends or their money again. If by some my story should be doubted, I can vouch for this as a fact, having been a sufferer myself to some extent.

I thus confirm my opinion, stated in another place, that this colony will never be a thoroughly prosperous one until colonists with money, added to ability and some practical knowledge, can be induced to settle here.

It is said by Dr. Mann that Natal is essentially a pastoral country. I beg to differ with Dr. Mann almost entirely in that opinion, as it has been clearly pointed out by the most experienced writers on Natal, and is asserted daily with reason, that the climate does not suit wool, excepting in a few localities. The exceptions to this rule are some of the mountainous districts; and cattle of all sorts, and under all condi-

tions, are a very hazardous property, owing to the ravages which are made by lung disease. I share the general opinion in expressing my belief that most of these diseases (from which we, too, have suffered in England of late years) are imported by the Dutch from their Fatherland, and encouraged by the low temperature of the night as compared with that of the day.

I return, therefore, in spite of all contradiction or ridicule, to my original point, that the entire success of Natal, in my humble judgment, rests with its sugar within a certain distance of the coast; but where agriculture is industriously carried on, with all proper appliances of education, enterprise, and capital, as in the case of Messrs. M'M—— and H——, on the Upper Umkomanzi, as I have before mentioned, it will have a fair success. In a word, this is a fine country for the emigrant. A steady man can live upon very little, and the most pressing requirement would be his groceries. He could certainly kill sufficient game to keep him in food, supposing his legitimate occupations allowed him the requisite time for fishing and shooting, or that his habits of life made him a sportsman.

Upon two or three occasions I have known the currency to have been entirely stopped, in consequence of the Kaffirs hoarding up the money they receive, and not permitting it to circulate again amongst Europeans. They are bad financiers, and their custom is to bury it. In the performance of this ceremony they are particularly mysterious; and only count over their riches when

they feel sure they will not be surprised or seen by any one. I remember upon one occasion, when the troops went to D'Urban, and left Pietermaritzburg without a garrison, that every shop and store was closed because there was no money in the place. It was all sunk in land, but not so profitably as it might have been.

After leaving Mr. W——'s, we came upon an Indian village, which was a collection of houses or huts built for the Coolies, outcasts here as in India. We found the inhabitants possessed a great mania for cock-fighting—a mode of gambling which is popular with the Cingalese, the Malays, and other Eastern peoples. We witnessed several interesting battles. But the Kaffirs thoroughly ignore the habits and customs of these imported strangers. They have no feelings in common with these Coolies; they always keep them as far away from them as possible; and during our sojourn, which lasted a month, I never saw a Kaffir speak to any one of these people. It was really an amusing sight to see them pass each other upon the road; and whenever so untoward a meeting took place—which was of necessity not seldom—the Kaffir would throw whatever skin or covering he might have upon his person over his head, until the Coolie should have passed by, in order not to inhale his breath. Some settlers here were trying to introduce silkworms, urged by the example of the Mauritius probably, on the partial failure of the sugar-cane, but were not

successful. They ought to have introduced a few Chinese to have properly taught them the methods which have been successful in other countries, and to have given a start to the cultivation of the worm. The mulberry grows in great luxuriance, is very large and luscious, as was stated to be the case in the Mauritius, and it never entirely sheds its leaves.

It can scarcely be a matter of surprise that this extraordinary antipathy should exist between the Kaffir and the Coolie. Perhaps no two human beings exist so unlike each other. The one tall, muscular, of a fine presence, with an independent mind and carriage, averse to fawning, quick, irascible, cleanly, proud, easy to be led, difficult to be driven; the other lissom, small, cringing, without mind or will of his own, humble, self-abased, crafty, untruthful, obedient, submissive to others' will, but with little of his own; what wonder that they should never assimilate nor associate together! The Kaffir will labour for love fifty per cent. more industriously than for wages. He will come when he likes, go when he likes, and do much or little, as seemeth him good. The Coolie is an outcast in religion and class, and will labour well when it is his interest to do so, and no present means of overreaching his employer present themselves. The one must be watched to be valuable as a slave, the other resents all interference in him as a servant. When we add to this that their habits of mind are as different as their customs and habits of life; that one

believes in nothing, cares for nothing, and fears everything; that the other has his own creed, and would fain be convinced of the superiority of another, it will not seem so strange that they neither eat, drink, nor sleep together, and that the very presence of the inferior animal is resented as an insult by the superior.

After leaving the Indian village, we hurried on, in order to be present at the Umzinto Races, and were fortunate enough to arrive just in time. Moderate as was the sport, people flocked from all parts to witness it. Many came in their waggons from D'Urban and Pietermaritzburg, and great interest was manifestly taken in the sport, which, after the fashion in England, is an annual entertainment. The day's racing commenced at eleven o'clock in the morning, and the course was over a fine flat plain, about two miles from the river. There was an absence of grand stands, betting-rings, and champagne; and the programme consisted principally of handicap, hurdle, and flat pony-races, of the native breeds. It was very far from Newmarket form; but then it was a long way from Newmarket Heath, and we stood in no fear of the Admiral. Usually as many as ten horses competed for each prize, occasionally more; and the riding was very satisfactory to the parties engaged in it, though I saw nothing that need give Fordham any uneasiness. The diversion caused by these two days' racing was a source of great enjoyment to a very large field of settlers and natives; and a repetition or recurrence of them was

eagerly looked forward to. The evenings were spent in dancing and singing, which appeared to form a natural part of the entertainment, and no few European ladies were present. Accommodation was, in fact, so limited, that I had the pleasure of giving up my waggon to four of the fair sex to sleep in. I passed the nights underneath it, and formed a kind of tent or four-poster by fixing canvass all round the wheels. I should doubtless have been rewarded for this self-abnegation; but I had great difficulty in getting rid of the numberless stinging insects which rose in rebellion from the grass, until I finally succeeded in exterminating them by the aid of sulphur—a strong measure, which a Dutchman communicated to me as a specific.

After the races were over I visited a clergyman of the district, and found him indisposed. I regretted this much, as I should have been glad of any information he could have given me on the subject of education, or the increase of proselytism. He was one of the scriptural teachers taken out by Bishop Colenso, and afterwards ordained by him; and from this circumstance I have no doubt that I should have found him capable of imparting, and willing to impart to me, much that I wished to know.

After remaining a couple of days in this neighbourhood, we hired a boat in order to continue our journey along the banks of a small bay. This, in a great many places, was more picturesque than convenient for travelling, as the luxuriance of the overhanging vege-

tation, on both sides, in parts entirely covered the water; and had it not been for the great skill with which my native attendants paddled me, we should undoubtedly have been upset. I was frequently obliged to lie flat upon my back in the canoe while it glided underneath the hanging branches. There were too in the bay numerous small islands, covered with shrubs and plants of tropical growth. From one of these I fished for supper, and could have obtained any amount of oysters, which I drew up in clusters. The Kaffirs opened them with a piece of "umsimbiti," or ironwood, just as adroitly as my friend Mr. Wilton, of Ryder Street, St. James's—and, as they have now reached half-a-crown a dozen, at considerably less money—and we swallowed them, with no compunctious visitings of conscience as to price, as fast as possible, and very much enjoyed our primitive repast. As it was now becoming dark, and the foliage added to our doubts, we made up our minds to put up in this bay all night. For this purpose we fastened the boat to a tree, kindled a little fire on one of the islands (for the night air over the water was cold enough), where we stretched our legs for a short time; and then, creeping into the boat again and rolling ourselves up in the blankets, we slept soundly till the following morning. My hours were at all times early in the country, and the sun was not high when, looking about, I observed smoke curling up on the brow of a neighbouring hill. It was an unexpected sight in this wilderness, and I

discovered that we were not far from a settler's house, with great satisfaction. This we visited, after paying our men and dismissing the canoe.

The master of this habitation was a very jovial fellow—a man as glad to receive us as we were to visit him—a practiser of hospitality, who welcomed us to “tiffin,” and showed us his property. The land was well suited for the growth of sugar, the only thing against it being the melancholy fact that the settler was too poor to cultivate it. I believe I may add, to his credit, that he had sense enough to know it, which every settler does not.

I was very much astonished by seeing Kaffirs catch fish here for their own use; not that there is any physical incapability for the occupation, but they were the first I had seen at this employment, as, almost without exception, their religious scruples weigh so far with them that they look upon fish as unclean and unfit for food. The quantity of fish that I saw was wonderful, and some of them were of a good size. These facts are easily accounted for by this universal abstinence on the part of the natives. The weather was intensely hot, and in the exercise that we were taking, we longed to refresh ourselves by going into the water. Bathing, however, was entirely out of the question with any prospect of comfort or safety, as I saw two large crocodiles within a few yards of me while I was contemplating a “header” from the bank. The presence of these reptiles frustrated the attempt to

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get a swim ; and as, unfortunately, both my friend and myself were unprepared to attack them, we had to make a speedy retreat from their neighbourhood. In no place was I more impressed with the beauties of contentment in everybody's case but my own. Every one was quiet, composed, uninterested, and happy, as I was informed ; and they looked dull and stupid to a degree.

I travelled onwards until I came to a sugar-mill, where the contrast was great. Capital was brought to bear upon it, and native labour at a premium ; and I noticed that the Kaffirs were at work, and as busy as bees. The greater the distance from towns the better I found the men worked. The reason is obvious ; that more power rests with the employers themselves, who act practically according to the circumstances of the case. These men have freer communication with the chiefs in case of dispute as to terms of hiring and leaving. And in the event of settlers requiring servants, nothing can be done so satisfactorily as by the intervention of this universally-acknowledged authority.

As I was wandering in a wood near to an extensive kloof, an accident occurred to me which might have cost me my life, at least my eyesight. A large eagle called the King of the Mountains, and by Kaffirs (who know him, and entertain a salutary fear of his powers) a man-eater, attacked me, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I kept him off. He fought desperately,

and his swoop was more fearful than anything I could have imagined. I endeavoured to break his wing with a stick I had in my hand ; but this made no impression upon an animal which had strength enough to have killed me with a blow. A Kaffir came up just as I was becoming tired from the struggle with the bird, and when I must have given way in another three or four minutes, and despatched him with his assagai. He cut off its wings as ornaments, and was proceeding to some other performances of a like nature, when he was prevented by another attack. No sooner was this enormous bird killed than the female came down upon us in a similar manner. It was not without considerable difficulty, striking with the assagai and the stick, that we put an end to her likewise ; and we discovered close by the spot the circumstance to which we had reason to attribute this extreme ferocity : there was the nest, in which were three eaglets, ~~to~~ to which we put an end at once, not entirely from motives of humanity—though it is but just to admit that, as they could only have fallen a prey to some wild beast in the absence of their natural protectors, we acted a Christian-like part by the poor things. These eagles build upon the ridge of a rock, and, excepting from their great size and the concomitant circumstances of climate and scenery, might be well compared with the eagles at Killarney or in many parts of Scotland. The putrid carrion which was strewn around their nest was sufficient evidence of the predatory nature of their habits, and the carcasses

of smaller animals smelt most offensively even from a long distance.

~~X~~The day following my encounter with these eagles we had a pig-hunt, a far more amusing and less dangerous occupation than the former. We heard that "wart hog" was very plentiful here; and the Kaffir always knows where to find him, for he traces him by the turning-up of the ground from the vicinity of his lair, a certain sign that he has been in search of roots. An English or Irish agriculturist, Essex or Galway, would be puzzled to know the pedigree of these animals, nor would he gain much could the Herald's College supply it, as they have large flat heads, protruding eyes, are hideously ugly, without any prize points, generally similar in form to a hippopotamus. The natives, who seem almost as fond of destroying animal life as the English themselves, take great delight in killing them, looking upon them not in the light of a noble quarry, as our Indian pigstickers might do, but in the same manner as we regard rats and other vermin; they expressed, as may therefore be supposed, great disgust at our eating their flesh. They are certainly fair game, as these pigs do great harm to the mealy gardens, and, to my mind, give the finest sport that can be obtained upon the coast.

~~X~~Having finished our pig-hunt, and started on a fresh beat, we put up a large leopard, which was discovered—to our surprise as well as his own—basking in the sun close by the side of a small stream, which had pro-

bably been his great inducement for choosing the site. We had several dogs and Kaffirs with us, and gave chase at once, the dogs pursuing it hotly through a dense wood between the Umzinto and Jfafa. One by one, as these courageous animals came up with the brute, it turned abruptly round, and with a single stroke of its paw struck them to the ground. The least severely wounded were placed *hors de combat*; and in this manner we lost five dogs before we succeeded in killing the leopard. It must have lived upon the ipiti buck, which literally swarmed in this region. The fawns of these antelopes are of great beauty, and of great agility, though they fall before the leopard, by whose presence they are terrified into defenceless submission.

If the native Kaffirs were to endeavour to get their hounds more equal in speed, or to stop the leaders as they advance upon the leopard, I have no doubt that they would save the lives of many dogs. The leopard is sufficiently cunning to know that his safety depends upon singly attacking animals which in a body are too much for him, and whose courage is sure to outstrip their sagacity in pursuit. Hence arises the constant loss of hounds, though eventual capture of the game, in a leopard hunt.

On our return to the waggons we came upon the trail of an "impisi," or hyæna. We dragged up to him, and in about half an hour afterwards, to our great delight, and certainly to the astonishment of our servants, the dogs gave tongue. The Kaffirs informed us

that this beast, though to be found in some places, is not common, nor easy to be got at. We hunted it by scent in a determined sort of manner, till the solitary animal was in view. When we came up with it, it was decided that we should put an end to it at once, as the day was far advanced. A Kaffir is cruel in his mode of destruction or revenge, but now, amidst a shower of assagais, the hideous beast rolled over dead. The men lost no time in skinning it, leaving the carcass upon the plain for the vultures. It was dark when we reached the Umzinto stores very soon after sundown, where we enjoyed a festive evening. This was but one of the many jovial evenings I spent in Africa, for the settlers were very pleasant fellows, and when a fresh arrival was announced, they all turned out to greet and to entertain him. The entertainment was sometimes rough, but none the less hearty, and many a Scotch reel and Irish jig did I dance during my stay here, though my partners might not have graduated at Almack's.

Being informed that there was a settler in this locality who grew chillies extensively, I decided to pay him a visit on the morrow, and, with his permission, to walk round his possessions. The permission was not difficult to obtain. He certainly had a snug little place, which was well cared for, and prettily surrounded with orange trees, and those shrubs which are natural to the soil. He had some kilns where he dried the chillies, after which they were ground into cayenne

pepper and sent to D'Urban. The business was easily arranged, as a financial question ; for a merchant gave him a standing price of one shilling a pound, and lent him the cases, in which they were packed for exportation. The great drawback to this profitable concern was that he could not get a Kaffir to help him ; for the dust which is raised by the manufacture of this pepper gets into their eyes and noses, causing acute inflammation, and an irritation so terrible for the time as to resemble temporary madness.

As an illustration of the horror in which the Kaffirs hold the possibility of being thus affected, and their undoubted experience of its effects, I will state the following fact :—There were some oxen, employed by one of the principal manufacturers of this compound, yoked to a waggon, which got out of its depth in crossing the River Umzinto ; and, as might have been expected, the boxes of pepper floated out of the waggon down the stream. The property was valuable ; but, although a reward was offered, and numbers of men were close by, not one of them would attempt to save a single box of the pepper.

I had a great deal of conversation on the business with this man, who told me that he found it profitable, and I have no doubt that it answered his purpose remarkably well. Comparing his position here with what it had been in the Highlands of Scotland, he had certainly lost no ground, socially or pecuniarily. Having seen as much of this process of kiln-dried chillies and

its results as possible, I proceeded to Mr. A——'s, who had commenced growing sugar. He is an intelligent man, from whom I hoped for much information, but as he had only been a few months at it, I was not able to judge, nor was he able to gratify my curiosity, as to whether he would find it a lucrative speculation or not. He had, besides, a Kaffir store; and it was amusing to watch the small haggling and primitive huckstering of the place—to see a chief come down here to make a wife a present of a few beads, or other common ornaments of which they are fond, over which he would chaffer half an hour before purchasing them. His mode of buying blankets was likewise droll, but as thoroughly practical as that of any old housewife in Witney. He held the blanket up to the light, and carefully examined it, looking first longways and then crossways, and then running his eyes systematically all over it. Should he chance in his inspection to discover the smallest hole, nay, the slightest flaw, he walked out of the store with as much coolness as if he had discovered a pre-arranged plan to get the better of him.

While here I saw a few intoxicated Kaffirs, a thing which I never saw elsewhere, and which I have always heard is a most unusual sight, as it is a violation of the law of the country ever to offer them spirits.

There is a penalty of £5 imposed upon any white man (and it has never entered the head of the legislator that a native could do so) who intentionally inebriates a Kaffir. Their natural temperament is one of such great

excitability that they do not require stimulants of any kind, and cannot retain their reason under their influence. I spent some time in this neighbourhood watching the cultivation of coffee, in which for especial reasons I took the greatest interest. A plantation was commenced, but the plants seemed delicate, and unsuited to the nature of the climate; and it was doubtful whether the scheme must not be abandoned for some more lucrative employment of time and capital.

I had been a long time in the country without having witnessed a buffalo-hunt, so I went with my retinue of native servants and assistants to visit a Kaffir chief about eighty miles distant. I did not, in truth, anticipate any very exciting or extensive sport here, as buffaloes are not to be met with in large herds in this part of the colony of Natal; but they are to be seen in detached bodies, or by twos and threes, and a few occasionally come across the lower part of the Draakenberg into the wild, rugged, and uncultivated country of the Umzimkulu river. A Kaffir chieftain is always ready for sport, so he ordered a number of his own men, some assistant Hottentots, and a good pack of dogs to be in readiness; and, if not quite up to Leicestershire form, he mounted us well. He appeared to know in what direction our sport would lie; so, after having a good two hours' gallop—by way, I presume, of giving us a breather, for we saw nothing like beef—we approached a thick bush, where he said we should not have long to wait. He

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BUFFALO-CHARGE.

was quite right, for not more than ten minutes had elapsed before manifest signs were exhibited by our cattle that something was at hand. Our dogs became excited, our horses pricked up their ears, and we could distinctly hear a disturbance in the reeds; though the thicket was far too dense for us to recognise our game, or for the eye to penetrate. By degrees the crushing and trampling of the long grass and underwood became more continuous, the tearing of trees became louder and louder; the Kaffirs and Hottentots set up a chorus which beat all English tally-hoing into fits; they cracked their whips, the dogs barked furiously, when out rushed from the dense jungle five buffaloes, their manes dancing on their necks, their eyes flashing fire, their heads lowered, their horns clashing, as if seeking where best to attack us. But no time was given them to collect their scattered senses—in an instant they were pierced with a volley of assagais. The dogs set upon two of the most violent of the enraged brutes, which had been the most severely wounded, and, overpowered by the general onslaught, down they fell. The other three, comparatively unhurt, took warning from their comrades, and made off at full speed. We did not pursue them, for both men and horses were dreadfully fatigued with the sport, and feeling quite satisfied with the success that had attended our first efforts, we finished off our wounded victims, and returned to the kraal. Several dogs, of course, were lost, but that is always expected in such hot contests.

It is a source of great delight to the Kaffirs to finish successfully a buffalo-hunt, for they are exceedingly fond of the flesh. They make a great feast upon such occasions with their retainers, wives, and friends. And although abstinent in the matter of drink, they may be said almost to intoxicate themselves with the amount of raw meat they swallow. It is worthy of notice that in honour of their guests they cooked the steaks. Fire, which has not yet appeared in the shape of a tinder-box, or patent lucifers, is yet not difficult to obtain, as a light can always be procured by a due exercise of patience and experience in woodcraft, by rubbing two jagged pieces of Umsimbiti wood together for about twenty minutes, when they will ignite, and a grand roast is the result.

All through this district you may see natives laden with monkey skins, for they are one of the most popular exercises of native speculation. Travelling from kraal to kraal in the hope of disposing of them, the traders recommend their wares, and hundreds of them are sold as clothing to form aprons. The animals are of little value as monkeys, because, both large and small, they are so exceedingly numerous in the vicinity of this river. I have without any extraordinary exertion, and within a limited space of ground, killed as many as twenty a day myself, which a Kaffir skinned for me in an incredibly short time. Another commodity in which they deal, and which are easily procurable about these woods, are porcupine quills, in

which a brisk trade is driven. The uses to which they are put are not of the most delicate or refined kind, as I have often seen the Kaffirs amuse themselves by scratching their heads; or, when in an indolent mood, which is not an uncommon case with the Kaffir, a wife has to perform this duty for her husband. These animals are easily destroyed; for their burrows are at no depth below the surface of the ground, but generally among the roots of the trees. It is common throughout Africa, as well as in the other quarters of the globe. It resists attacks from dogs, whom it is able to wound severely with its quills; but the story of its capability to shoot them forth like arrows is untrue. The quills serve the purpose above mentioned, but are also wrought into various ornamental devices for belts, pouches, and the appendages of uncivilised dress.

All over the country large game is to be procured, and ivory is plentiful. The ubejane, or black rhinoceros, is found in some parts of the country; but they are not seen near villages, and their feeding-grounds are the far-off solitudes on the banks of rivers. Civilisation has driven them far from their original haunts. I once witnessed a remarkable fight between two of these brutes; the roar they uttered was terrible to listen to, their continued stamping and bellowing echoed round the mountains, and could have been heard for miles, and the water in which they indulged their propensity perfectly foamed as if boil-

ing. This fight was one of the grandest displays of animal life I ever beheld, and it was of long duration, as I heard their roaring during the whole night, only ceasing when I had myself sunk into a fitful and uneasy slumber towards daybreak.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Umzimkulu.—I live as a Kaffir.—Bathing.—Hair-dressing.—A Marriage.—Missionaries.—Superstitions.—Burials.—A Trial.—Witchcraft.—Kaffir Doctor.

My adventures up to this point must have appeared to the reader extremely commonplace; and the constant succession of mere traveller's difficulties, and the accounts of sport, which pictures only the realities of a rough country, must have palled upon the appetite. I come to a time when my acquaintance with Kaffir life became far more intimate, and more interesting than it had been.

Upon the banks of the Umzimkulu I took up my quarters under an unwonted pressure of hospitality, which I felt was not artificial, with a Kaffir chief who had a large kraal and fine herds. Community of tastes had something to do with the beginning of our intimacy, no doubt; for I still had some few beasts remaining, which had escaped the ravages of disease, the dangers of travel, and the eye of the dealers, which the "inkosi" was anxious to purchase. I let him have them (and should have willingly parted with more, for I was almost tired of commerce) at a

moderate price, wishing to be on good terms, as my stay in his country—that is to say, in his camp and in his power—would probably be for some months. A comfortable hut was allotted to me, and, having done with the only remains of civilisation, money-making, I resigned the fragments of what had been European clothes, and dressed myself as a Kaffir. I hope no indelicacy will be attached to this confession. I wore skins of animals tied round my waist, in sufficient quantities for all purposes of ordinary clothing; and large banana leaves were sewn together by the sympathising girls of the kraal to prevent the sun from scorching my back and shoulders, as my skin was not yet as capable of the same endurance as that of the natives. An African climate requires a length of service for acclimatisation. I did not wear shoes or stockings for ten months, and the inconvenience at first was considerable; but I persevered in my self-denial, until the soles of my feet became as hard as horn.

I think I have before said that the absence of some vices approaches a virtue. The Kaffirs are particularly cleanly in their persons; they bathe constantly, for their climate requires it, and they have the means always at hand. I have done so five or six times a day; and if the picaninnies do not go into the water at least four times a day they are punished by the father, who in such matters is accustomed to relieve the mothers of their task, and sometimes has as many as a hundred to look after. I used to be much amused

by watching these funny-looking little children playing in the water, and running about to dry themselves in the sun. The exhibition is not confined to South-Eastern Africa, as may be testified by the dwellers on the more populous banks of Father Thames and Severn, in divers places.

Nothing could exceed the personal kindness which I experienced during my residence with these interesting people. I was regarded more as a child of the family than as an inquisitive stranger, and was so well cared for that the chief would not allow me to take unwonted exercise, or to fatigue myself in any way. He forbade me to walk to the river to bathe, and ordered some of his girls to carry me. They were not much up to their work, and the first time it took twenty buxom lassies to do it. By dint of violent struggling with their burden they succeeded at last, and upon reaching the water they ducked me much in the same manner that the old bathing-women along the English coast are in the habit of serving ladies and children. My amusement was too great for my dignity to suffer much at their hands, and I found the process rather agreeable than otherwise. I was scarcely prepared for the completion of my toilet, which was less pleasant; for no sooner was the washing accomplished than they proceeded to paint me over with a kind of red earth. If the object was to render me irreconisable by my friends it succeeded to perfection—my own mother could not have known me; and it so altered my complexion that neither

Madame Rachel nor Mrs. Stevenson, who is advertising her war-paints during the recession of the great original, could have put on the finishing touch with greater care. In a very short time I became a perfect Kaffir in my labours and amusements, and there was nothing that delighted me more than dancing round the kraal by moonlight with my hosts. When I was at meals several of these girls held my wooden plate, whilst others with fans kept off the mosquitoes, nor would they allow one to settle upon me. They frequently tried to count the hairs in my beard, an endless sort of amusement, with but little variety; it was one, however, with which they were much taken. They constantly pulled it, a great deal more to their satisfaction than to mine, as they said to ascertain whether it was really growing. The Kaffir cannot cultivate hair upon the face, and they were therefore rather sceptical of my own power to do so.

Certainly the happiest part of my time in Africa was when I had so far overcome my prejudices as to associate with and live after the fashion of these people. My object in going out was originally to hunt, and to give such information to subsequent travellers as might be of service to them, and be thoroughly relied on. But a spirit of enterprise took me beyond this, and I had a great passion for seeing the Kaffir as he was among his own people, and not only when decked in the small-clothes of ceremony, which make an uncivilised being one of the most contemptible

objects in the world. A Kaffir in his kraal is a very different being from a Kaffir in a hired coat and trousers in the streets of Pietermaritzburg. I have had the pleasure of seeing him in both forms, and from this time I knew which most to admire. It must not be supposed that I am enthralled by any schoolboy-like prejudice in favour of the noble savage, or that I doubt the value of refinement and civilisation to ameliorate the condition of any man. It is only that I could not help seeing that the enforcement of the externals of civilisation upon a being who had never been instructed in the value of its institution, who preferred his own ways of living, of thinking, of acting, to the dictates of others, who would have laboured, as he would have dressed, without any restraint, and who had never been taught that he had any master but himself, must be of questionable benefit to him personally, and should be most tenderly and delicately urged upon him. After the friendly terms upon which I have lived with these people, and the great consideration I received at their hands, I may be regarded as no impartial testimony to their virtues. I can only assure my readers that if their vices were those of savage life, their virtues far exceeded our own in some of the most essential points; and it is a very great question whether the introduction of civilisation could bring to the present generation the blessings which it would undoubtedly confer upon a future. Their hospitality is not the hospitality of pride or wealth;

their personal kindness is genuine good-breeding; their abstinence, unless under great excitability, and on very rare occasions, is more than Christian-like; and, even at its worst, it puts to the blush a Lord Mayor's feast. In the midst of their polygamy, and where marriage assumes professedly its lowest form, they are less unchaste than a French nobleman, and less barbarous than a London drayman or a Birmingham mechanic. They are truthful, and deal with crime with a sort of rough justice which has quite as much to recommend it as some of our own laws. In war and in personal strife of any kind we must not judge them too harshly. Europeans who hold themselves to be not far behind us in refinement have been known to outrage the laws of humanity, some have said of civilised warfare. Of course, in the case of a Kaffir, where his self-restraint has always depended upon his power, we cannot expect high chivalry, or that mercy which "droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven;" and he is far better to dine with, notwithstanding the absence of a cook, than to fight with. But in their own homes disputes seldom occur, and quarrels between rival chieftains, as far as I could judge by my sojourn among them, were very exceptional, and usually open to mediation.

One of their greatest vices is their cruelty. Untaught nature frequently is cruel; and if we remark it in the savage, we have been told to do so in the European school-boy. It is, however, in a boy, almost

always want of consideration ; in a Kaffir it is a sort of revenge, which he takes on an animal which he judges to be his enemy. He never appears satisfied with getting rid of him the shortest way ; but once secure that no more danger is to be apprehended from him, he takes a miserable delight in seeing him suffer. If a beast were to be killed, and it could be done with safety, the Kaffir would like to have seen him disembowelled first, and his eyes put out. I have numberless anecdotes of this ferocity of his disposition, of which some will appear in these pages ; and it always struck me as singular that he unites with it a remarkable childlike tenderness, which makes him the kindest of hosts to those whom he likes and does not suspect, and the very best of nurses to those who are dependent upon him for assistance. In fact, the fault that sums up all is his inconsistency ; and the merest accident may at any moment act upon an untutored imagination of great power so as to throw him into a fit of ungovernable rage.

Hair-dressing amongst these people was an amusing sight to witness. Indeed I should have preferred always to look on. It was after this wise: the operator places his friend's head between his knees, holding him tightly, as in a vice, and with a porcupine's quill, or as they termed it, a "upape lwenungu," he works his hair up into a most elaborate mat, using the quill, which has a small hook at the end, similar to a lady's crochet-hook, much in the same way as we should

do in the act of crocheting. This operation takes some weeks before it is completed, as neither party is able to devote more than one hour a day to it. It is generally performed when the young man is thinking of making love, in order to render his person more attractive in the eyes of his dusky innamorata.

I had not been here long before my friendly chief took another wife—having, as it appeared to a moderate man like myself, quite a sufficiency—which marriage made a great impression upon my mind, not only as a curious ceremony, but as a comparison with our own hymeneal rites; and I shall endeavour to describe it.

About three o'clock in the day the bride, accompanied by parents and friends, was seen to approach the kraal of the future bridegroom. On the part of the gentleman no great anxiety was displayed; but upon observing her in the distance he sent twenty cows, driven by his herdsmen or servants—a sign of contract, as in all countries, Jewish, Gentile, or Christian—to meet her. These were given to the father as a dower from the bridegroom; forming, in a grazing country, the most appropriate present or payment. While these passed she squatted, keeping her eyes fixed upon them, with a laudable estimation of her own value, evidently counting the number. The attendants and friends of the bride, with a certain delicacy, remained behind; and the old gentleman, some distance in the rear, received them. The girl then arose from her sitting position, with considerable dignity,

and walked towards the kraal as naked as when born, with the exception of a grass mat. The peculiarity of her position in my eyes did not trouble her; and she carried the grass mat, rolled up and hung on her back, which was to be her future bed, with the same pride as a Girl of the Period would wear her white satin and orange blossoms. When a few yards from the kraal the chief's favourite wife (though I hardly think such a thing exists in any polygamous country but Turkey) came out to meet her, and offered the real trousseau, not immediately for her acceptance, but inspection. This was the bullock's-hide robe, which, after inspecting, she returned to the lady, who must be congratulated on the utter absence, or perfect control, of jealousy. Then two younger wives brought out a band of white beads, emblems of innocence, no less estimable in Kaffirland than England, with which they encircled her waist. She next proceeded to the entrance of the kraal, where she was met by the chief himself—a moment, we may suppose, of intense anxiety to a young lady unused to Belgravia and its self-possession. Here she fell upon her knees to receive a necklace of beads from the hand of her future husband, a symbol of the gentle yoke of marriage, which he placed round her neck. At this she appeared much gratified, and then for the first time entered into a conversation, of which we have no means of conveying the nature, but by the expectation that it was of a romantic kind. It lasted only for a short time,

and then the bride-expectant, having concluded the prefatory acts of her part of the duty, arose from her knees and was led into his hut. Here, for the purpose of consulting those instincts which are the same in the African and English, she remained by herself, to decide, before the sun went down, whether she would have him or not; though even here she appeared to me to follow the dictates of conventionalism more than nature, and I doubt very much whether she had any power in the matter beyond a weak intrepidity, which yields, above all things, to the power of custom. When she was supposed to have received the usual grace, which is as well understood as that of a bill at three months, and sufficient time for reflection had been given her, the chief came to the door of his hut, where all her doubts, and fears, and maidenly blushes had been deposited, and led her out through a long line of his people, the men standing in front, the women behind, numbering nearly two thousand; a vast attendance, far beyond the statistics of St. George's Hanover Square. This was a signal for them all to strike up some favourite song, a species of Dutch concert, introduced, we presume, by the early colonists, in which the former sang the following chorus of "Yebo, Inkosi!" a chorus before which Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides pale their fires, and which signifies, "Yes, O Chief!" and to the new bride they say, in accents which are certainly pleasant to the ear, and in words which are sincere enough, "Hamba

guschly ikaya," meaning, "Welcome to your home in peace." And this was effective, and struck us much by its simplicity, even more than by its novelty. The ceremony was concluded by a dance—an African institution as ancient and national as the Englishman's dinner—which commenced soon after four o'clock, P.M., and kept up without cessation for a clear twelve hours, the families not separating until four o'clock the following morning. We were all full dressed; that is to say, after the approved African mode. The men were armed with assagais and clad in their handsomest skins, with ostrich feathers in their heads; their faces were painted crimson, a fashion which they may have borrowed from us, to give them a more imposing appearance; and, as an improvement on a style of head-dress common among us of late years, some had a number of small live birds, of beautiful plumage, tied by one leg to a thin chain, the end of which was fastened round their necks. This adaptation of real life to our necessities I regard as very clever; and as they danced about these unhappy birds fluttered over their heads, doing duty for the diamond sprays, butterflies, and grasshoppers I have seen on some hats in England. This had a most extraordinary effect, difficult to convey by mere explanation; and the whole of the ceremony was accompanied, to my mind, by the most absurd signs and mummery, but which doubtless was as full of meaning and expression to the natives as our own are to us.

The chiefs generally have the pick of the women for miles and miles, and are most persevering in establishing or confirming their privilege. I have known one travel as far as two hundred miles, undaunted by difficulties which would have frightened an officer in the Guards, when he had heard of a girl who came up to his idea of perfection; and the Kaffir is fastidious as to personal development, though liberal enough as to mental accomplishments.

Girls never go out alone; they always walk about in a manner which is said to assimilate to that of the English school-girl, in couples, with their arms round each other's neck. Maidenly reserve denies them the opportunity of exhibiting their charms in the country, and the only time they are seen in public is at these dances.

Another of the characteristics of these young women is peculiar to the West and the South. They marry young; as at an early age, when most European ladies are supposed to be in their prime (our own notions differ from received opinions on this subject), these black creatures become old. The fat, fair, and forty school is one in which they would take no prizes: they are then ill-looking and haggard, and lose their symmetrical form, owing to a different cause from that which affects American beauty. They grow old from hard labour; which they, however, look upon as a duty, and perform in the service of their husbands or children, like exemplary women, without a murmur.

Before marriage the girls have but little to do. They idle about, giving some slight assistance to their mothers in the household work ; and as “*embonpoint*” is a virtue, they live upon curds and “*outchualla*,” which makes them plump. It is well that they cultivate this personal excellence, as they have not many others on which to depend. Though frequently good-humoured, they are not pretty in our sense of the word. After a man has been married about a fortnight he contemplates, supposing always that the first venture has turned out to his satisfaction, the idea of taking another wife ; an amount of enterprise which it is difficult to reconcile with his habits of extreme idleness, but which may be accounted for by the want of excitement, and the propriety of making worlds to conquer where there were none before.

A missionary was very kindly treated, and received great hospitality at the hand of my host, the chief of whom I am writing, for a few days ; after which time he was guilty of some great breach of etiquette or friendship, of the subject of which I was purposely left in ignorance. The chief was much annoyed at this piece of supposed impertinence on the part of the missionary, and, whether justly or unjustly, reproved him for it, upon which the missionary spat in his face. I am glad to say that it was the only instance of my countrymen so far forgetting themselves. So gross an insult as this, committed in the presence of his wives and myself, and certain to be commented upon as of so

unusual a character, could not be forgiven. I have already spoken of the rough sense of justice inherent in the Kaffir character, so the "indunas," local squires, were called together, and a council was held. He was sentenced to a punishment which was not too severe for the grossness of the offence. He was condemned to receive one dozen lashes from the bullock-hide whip; an instrument more formidable certainly than our conventional birch rod, but not more capable of doing permanent injury to the victim. He was made to bare a certain portion of his body, supposed to be harder, but not thicker, than its antipodes, and flogged while leaning over a log of wood—mild representative of the headsman's block!—as boys are at public schools.

Wherever I have had occasion to speak of missionaries I have been compelled to censure their shortcomings. I am of opinion, however, that if missionaries were to adapt their tone of feeling and their mode of expression, together with their dress and manners, to those of the people they visit, and with whom externals are calculated to operate to so great an extent, they would be able to make a far greater impression than they otherwise can expect to do. If the Gospel be worth propagating, no sort of sacrifice should be considered too great; wherefore, when amongst Kaffirs, if they would rub their bodies over with red earth, wear feathers, and an apron of skins, which they may, if they please, regard as the type of the Episcopate—a worthy ambition!—eat, drink,

and altogether live amongst them, so that, excepting by their superior intelligence and virtue, they should be mistaken for them, they would gain more influence, and have a better chance of performing the great obligation they have imposed upon themselves—that of making them Christians, and of commanding a respect for our people, and for themselves personally, as the representatives of the first of European churches—than as at present, by walking about in long black coats and dirty white neckcloths, affecting the manners and appearance of a class of Englishmen from whom in their own country they are widely separated, and to whom they bear but a very faint resemblance in either manners, appearance, or true self-devotion to their cause.

But to resume the thread of my narrative at a point in which I may be able to show the Kaffir as he lives among his own people.

The Kaffir is a most superstitious being : his superstitions, which stand him in stead of many civilised institutions and religious excitements, are, as a rule, of a quaint and harmless nature. Most nations of antiquity revolt at bare death, and endeavour to apologise for it. When a person dies the Kaffir always says he remembers having observed (and on this occasion his memory is not only retentive, but convenient) certain ill omens which had happened to his kraal as far back as twenty moons. A snake, who represents the devil in some form or other, has been

seen entering the hut; or fowls (a harmless bird, on whose shoulders may be fastened any onus with impunity) passing the front—these he looks upon as being very ominous signs of a death-warrant issued against one or other member of the family. No Kaffir will allow his poultry to be driven in front of his habitation—which, after all, only proves his tenacity of life—they are always kept at the back. If one of the cocks were to perch in front of the kraal, and crow during the night, besides waking the family, or any chance guest he might be entertaining, it would be looked upon as a death-warning. He will not even eat a hen's egg, preferring starvation to death, as an Irishman might believe; nor will he sell one under a sum of money equivalent to fourpence. If avarice induces him to do so it is usually found to be rotten—a mode of barter by which his conscience is silenced, and the amount of his belief in his country's superstitions may be estimated.

Kaffirs live to a great age, and a respect is shown towards their old men and women, Spartan-like in its tenderness and punctuality. They are generally accompanied by two boys, who lead them about with much care, and give them their daily baths. This feeling of respect is entirely lost in the case of European settlers. I have observed that when a grey-headed white makes his appearance in the colony, especially if his grey hairs be accompanied with other symptoms of senility, the natives hold him in derision, and point at him, making signs to one another plainly

indicative of a deep feeling of dislike. "Yes," said a Kaffir chief to me, "what a wicked man he must have been, to have left his own country in order that he might have his bones buried in a foreign land." So that there is a great feeling of patriotism at the bottom of this apparent irreverence for old age. Extremes have met here.

During times of scarcity I have known the whole inhabitants of a kraal—a most unusual absence of instinct in semi-barbarous people—die from eating injurious roots; but such a calamity is, of course, of a most exceptional kind. Whenever such a catastrophe does occur the kraal is burnt to the ground. I visited one where a man had just paid the last debt of nature, and his friends were going to bury him, so I remained to see the rites, and to obtain what other information I could. At these solemn ceremonies the Kaffirs exhibit their virtues, in the way of patience and self-restraint, which are great; and, above all, of hospitality, the violation of which is considered one of their greatest sins. In pursuance of this idea it is thought right to provide for the possible necessities of the dead. Electra was not more solicitous for her father's tomb. In the grave with the body they placed three huge calabashes, as large as could be obtained, and which I trust were no measures of the appetites of himself or his friends when in this world. They were filled with "outchualla" and "mealies," intended for the entertainment of himself and his god; and as it was thought

probable that such luxuries might tempt some companion to visit him, in the form of a spirit, a sufficiency was set aside for at least three of them. In the division of his property after death the ordinary form was followed; and his brother succeeded to the wives of the deceased, who were a great addition to his wealth. He already had several dusky beauties in his kraal, and informed me confidentially, with the sort of mystery which belongs to what racing men call "a real good thing," that each of the girls were worth fifteen cows at least. I was not surprised at the absence of mourning in the surviving brother; for, looking upon it in a pecuniary point of view, it was rather a good legacy. The value of women is always calculated by the cows they bring, varying from ten to a hundred. One thing redounds enormously to their credit as financiers. These people never appeared to require the assistance of lawyers or parchments, as everything is settled amicably amongst themselves. Every prisoner is here his own lawyer; and an oily tongue should therefore accompany a sharp sword.

When a prisoner is to be tried for any great offence the Kaffirs sit in a circle, wearing long, dignified faces; not the less so, indeed, to my thinking, for the want of wig and gown. The culprit stands in the centre, and is allowed by their law to plead his own cause. He is not stopped by any remonstrance from the bench, but can say anything he likes. He begins by defending himself, and if the case be simple he can

have no difficulty in proving his innocence. If not, he argues, and then flatters his accusers; when none of these are of any avail, and it seems quite clear that the black cap or a heavy penalty awaits him, he looks very much distressed; and the principal chief, in a most summary manner, sentences him either to death or a heavy fine, which is always paid in cows. As a rule, though there are even in that country exceptions which go to prove it, dishonesty is very rare with the wild Kaffir; and here is an instance of their honesty. I once left my salt-box behind me when going upon a "trek," and after I had travelled about fifty miles, and had either given it up as lost, or ceased to think about it altogether, two men ran after me, holding the box up, and shouting to me to stop, in order that they might return me my property.

The Rev. Francis Fleming, in his work on South Africa, gives the following graphic account of a law case in Kreli's tribe, which came under his personal notice, and which will serve to elucidate the shrewdness of the "amapakati," or Kaffir advocate.

A verdict was required in the case of a Kaffir who, as plaintiff, brought an action for the recovery of damages, or a criminal prosecution, asserting that an ox of his had been stabbed, and a portion eaten by six Kaffirs. These men were accordingly placed at the bar as prisoners. They pleaded "not guilty" of stabbing the ox, and they repudiated the guilt of eating him on the ground that the ox had been gored

by another ox in a fight, which is not an uncommon circumstance by any means; and that one having died from the wound, they had eaten it, thinking that they were justified in doing so. The case caused great excitement in the tribe, as it was felt to be an awkward precedent to establish among the people, and the shrewdest "amapakati" were employed by the chief in the trial. As usual, every opportunity was given for a patient hearing, and the senior prisoner, who had conducted the case with considerable talent, concluded a very eloquent defence by urging that, from the peculiar appearance and the length of the wound, it was quite impossible that a man could have inflicted it. He was heard throughout patiently; but, when he had finished, an old "amapakati" proceeded to cross-examine him thus:—

Q. Where did the goring ox's tail grow?

A. On its rump.

Q. How did it grow there? Up or down, or at the side?

A. Down.

Q. Where did its horns grow?

A. On the head.

Q. How did they grow there? Up or down, or at the side?

A. Up.

Q. If, then, that ox gored the other, to do so he would have to put his head down, and tear up, would he not?

A. Yes.

Q. He could not tear down, could he?

A. No.

"Now examine the wound, and see whether the first incision was made at the top, or at the bottom?"

He answered, with reluctance, "The wound is largest at the bottom."

"Finding: The ox was stabbed, not gored, the prisoners are guilty."

Sentence—Each to be fined two cows.

It is true that materially I do not understand the force of this judgment; but it gave the greatest satisfaction as evidence of law and equity, and was received with loud applause.

I have already said something of the superstitions of these men, and they have some faith in witchcraft. When one argues with a Kaffir upon the absurdity of his believing whatever the wizards say, he does not condescend to reply, but turns round on you, and tells you that the most learned of our English doctors cannot save their own lives any more than he can. He considers that this settles the question of witchcraft in his favour.

I remember stopping with some Kaffirs in an out of the way part of the Umzimkulu, where one of these rascals was in the habit of visiting. He was a person of curiously sinister aspect, of a horridly stealthy and mysterious manner of address, of a ghastly ugliness of feature, and wicked expression of countenance.

Upon seeing him approach, they were affected as we have read and seen to be the case with persons of weak intellect—were positively half dead with fright, and they exercised every faculty in their power by the most grovelling submission or flattery, to keep the wizard, or “king of snakes,” as he is sometimes called, well disposed towards them. There is no limit to their conviction of his power, and, as it would seem, of his evil intent. They feared lest even a scowl from his face, or a look from his ill-omened eye, should work them some harm; should bring death or confiscation to their cattle, which to them is nearly as bad. It is an awful consideration that the man to whom he tenders his friendship, or shows signs of regard—to whom, for instance, he offers snuff—is frequently the victim who will suffer from his credulity, in having approached him; and will probably be put to death in a most atrociously cruel manner. His power is equally great, and as unscrupulously used, over the property of his slaves. If it be the whim of the wizard that a cow should be killed (and of course it is his whim whenever he is hungry, without a prospect of mealies), it is done without a murmur; nor does he ever neglect the opportunity it affords him of exhibiting his ghoul-like appetite. He reserves a large share of the best parts for himself. He considers himself much in the light of a feudal lord, perfectly independent of work—*fruges consumere natus*, a gentleman, only with a difference; for he gives out

that he was born into the world *without* father or mother. In most instances he has not known much of their care in early life; for his parents probably have been put to death for witchcraft; in which cases, analogous ones in which the guilty escape being too common in the world, the women are generally impaled, while the man escapes in consequence of being a free subject under our law. This is a melancholy lapse of justice; for he would otherwise be stoned to death. When witchcraft is discovered to exist, or to form the main occupation of the different members of a family, that family is destroyed. The feeling that wizards are the great workers for good or evil, is the strong feature of Kaffir belief, and tends to great demoralization. They implicitly believe that no one can die, except by accident, although their experience points out the fallacy by the number of exceptional examples. If, then, a person die from natural causes, it is attributed to the supernatural power which they are compelled to recognise, but which they call the mischief of witchcraft.

Whenever it is desirable that the decrees of Providence should be hurried, the members of the kraal are summoned together, and ordered to seat themselves in a circle; when the personal interests of the wizard begin to bear their bitter fruit. In the centre, the prophet, for such he is called, commences his odious and mysterious rites, which are to end in his own advantage, by the mummery of smelling for the

wizard—an invisible sort of attendant upon the holy man, under whose influence he acts. The victim singled out by the scoundrel is usually a man to whom he is bound by some sort of debt or obligation, and to whom therefore he owes a personal grudge; or it is some one who possesses large herds of cattle and wives which the wizard covets. This wretched farce, to end in a frightful tragedy, is at length played out; and the prophet grows warmer on the scent. The wizard is smelt out: the man is denounced and seized, in supposed obedience to the suggestions of the familiar spirit, in reality to these murderous designs; and he is then subjected to a most cruel and lingering death, in which his family and friends are compelled to participate by their superstition, and whose orgies are too horrible to narrate.

But as there are everywhere certain persons ahead of the age in which they live, I have known a Kaffir admit that an European doctor, without any compact with the devil, or any similar connexion with witchcraft, can counteract and relieve the sufferings of many maladies by the aid of his medicines. There is a certain confidence in our skill, though not universally admitted; and the great proof of it is that they are particularly fond of taking our physics, with the exception of pills—a form of pharmacy which they cannot understand how to swallow. Black draughts, as being the most nauseous, are their especial favourites. Crowds of Kaffirs with any imaginary illnesses you

please, from blue devils to rheumatism, will assemble round the house of Europeans to obtain them ; over which they smack their lips with the relish of a true connoisseur, between whiles exclaiming, "mooshly, mooshly," an expression of approbation which is weakly translated by "very good, very good indeed."

I have not dwelt upon the rites which belong to this horrible superstition, and which are of course akin to Obean worship. They are unfit, from their revolting barbarity, for ordinary publication ; and it need hardly be asserted here that when the very lives of innocent persons depend upon the malicious caprice of these so-called wizards or prophets, there is no condition of life either that escapes the evil influence of these monsters. If any argument were wanting for the introduction of civilisation by any means, and of the development of those common instincts which belong to all created beings, it would be supplied by a reference to the abominations which arise from this belief in witchcraft.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fight between a Kaffir and an Alligator.—Green Imambas.—Monkeys in Mischief.—Hyena Trapping.—Porcupine.—Use the Kaffirs make of the Quills.—Inoculating Cattle.—An Englishman carried off by a Leopard.—Ants.—Hottentots.—Baboons searching for Roots.—Desirable Spot for Settling.—A War Dance.—Lover's Pastime.—Kaffir Philosophy.

THE hunting expeditions of the natives were a source of great amusement to me; and I witnessed a curious struggle between a Kaffir and an alligator, among other combats of a like kind. The worst part of the exhibition was that the Kaffir seemed to delight in torturing the brute as long as possible, and I think I have mentioned this as one of the worst peculiarities of this people. He went in front of it, standing tolerably close to it, and just as the beast, making up his mind that a contest with his enemy was inevitable, began to move towards him, he jumped aside. Before it could turn round upon him, and with the precision and quickness of a practised fencer, he had thrust an assagai with barbed spear into its eye. In the sudden and intense agony which followed the attack, the animal then opened its mouth, stopping, moreover, in its career,

and manifestly disheartened, as well as disabled, by the wound; whereupon it received a volley of those weapons in rapid succession down its throat. This barbarous, though legitimate, mode of slaughter, was not yet over; for tied to the end of these assagais was a thong of rough hide attached to the weapon, expressly for the furtherance of this particular sport. This the hunter fastened securely to a tree which was growing, in a sort of malicious accident, in the immediate neighbourhood, and amused himself with killing gradually, watching its agonies with a pleasure which an eye-witness only can comprehend.

ere I also saw a green imamba, that had got an unfortunate monkey in its murderous folds. It had wed itself round the bole of a tree, which it converted into a lever. It seemed to press the animal by main force until its body had become as flat as the palm of a hand, and with its saliva worked it almost into a pulp. It was a dainty morsel for such a snake; but to the spectator the scene presented a most painful and ghastly sight. The poor monkey himself had been wrung out of his misery; but there yet remained for my sympathy the victim's companions, who were sitting on the boughs chattering most perseveringly, and perfectly alive to the real terrors of their situation, shaking from fear, lest they should soon share the same fate as their late comrade.

On another occasion I recollect coming in contact with one of these horrible snakes (of which I appear

to have had a superstitious dread) while under the shade of a small mealy house. The victim on this occasion was of a different kind from the last. In the corner of the house a hen was sitting upon some eggs, entirely upon motherly cares intent, and utterly unconscious of the doom that awaited her. Presently I heard her cackling as if in distress, and upon looking up I perceived that a green imamba had twisted itself round the bird and taken possession of her nest. The wretched superstition attached to the reptile was the means of saving its life; for the woman to whom this house belonged, entreated me not to destroy the reptile, saying that she much preferred to lose her hen, to having any kind of snake destroyed on the premises. She concluded from this omen that sufficient grief would befall her house without the murder of the sacred plunderer.

Although I commiserated the fate of the monkey whose garotting I witnessed as related a few lines back, I confess that they are very mischievous. When walking in this locality one morning in search of game, and not anticipating a sudden change of weather, I chanced to look up at a tree in advance, and there I saw, to my intense astonishment, what appeared to be snow falling in thick flakes. This was a case in which it was impossible to believe my own eyes, and I was at a loss to conceive what it possibly could be. Upon reaching the spot, I discovered four or five animals seated among the branches, busily employed

on I knew not what. They were monkeys which had been visiting a mealy garden; and between the moments of satisfying their natural wants, they took to play. They happened to catch an unfortunate white stork, the fleecy nature of whose skin, and his attractive colour, had charmed them. They had taken him up into a high tree, and were plucking him alive when I reached the scene of their voluntary labours. They held him between them, and positively plucked off every feather without bringing blood, a feat which it would have puzzled the most skilful of cooks to have performed. It really was a laughable sight, although I was angry with myself for being so amused with their cruelty, and felt truly sorry for the bird. The ingenious manner in which these originals had seen fit to amuse themselves, the poor bird struggling and screeching, while the mischievous rascals were stripping their victim, and their business-like attention during the operation, formed a very ridiculous picture; and at length, when it was divested of its last feather, the poor bird was turned adrift as if it could be of no more possible use to its tormentors, and the monkeys ran off chattering and congratulating themselves upon, having turned out something new for the natives to speculate upon in the Caffrarian fauna.

Whilst living with my friend the chief, I had splendid hunting and shooting; nor was I ever without some novelty in the science of woodcraft. I witnessed the trapping of many hyenas and wolves. Often, when

we had retired for the night, after a day which made sleep acceptable, I was disturbed by hearing the most piercing shrieks in various directions, now on one side of the kraal, now on the other, which were uttered by animals in the last agonies of death. Many a night was made hideous by these denizens of the neighbouring woods, attacked by tiger-cat or hyena. Many times, too, with an excusable interest in my supposed curiosity, when any animal was trapped at night, the natives were careful to show their politeness, and give me the first opportunity of an exhibition. They awoke me from my sleep and insisted upon my going out, *nolens volens*, and, with much ceremony, performing my part as a stranger, *i.e.*, dealing the final blow.

Game was most plentiful, and the buck were so beautiful that it seemed really a sin to kill them. When not requiring food, in other words, when our necessities were not greater than our love of slaughter, we allowed them to enjoy their lives for a short time longer: being satisfied that they were in a most accessible larder.

The Umzimkulu teems with alligators, rhinoceros, and many of the larger kinds of wild animals and reptiles; and with various species of monkeys. The pole-cat and bush-cat are also frequently found here, and, like the rat in England, if not kept under, by the strictest and most merciless persecution, are great enemies to the settler's poultry-yard. Every patch

of cultivated ground is open to one marauder or the other. A porcupine used to visit my host's garden, and root up anything he could lay his quills upon. He had a particular fancy for sweet potatoes; so one day I put an end to him, and, following the customs of the country of which I now boasted to be a citizen, I claimed his hide. The quills I presented to the chief himself as a trophy of which I might well be proud. They were not thrown away upon one who thoroughly enjoyed sitting outside his hut, regaling himself with outchualla, whilst he made his wives scratch his head with them for hours together. I think I mentioned in speaking of porcupines before this, that these quills are also used for ornamental purposes. There is among them considerable talent for dressmaking, *as far as it goes*; and the Kaffirs very ingeniously make a handsome fringe, which is adorned and edged with these quills, something like a kilt, and which the girls hang round their waists before dancing. The belle enjoys, amongst other privileges, quite a monopoly of finery; and a favourite of the kraal usually wears one of these fringes at all times.

The quills used by the men for scratching their heads are not confined, like the tortoise-shell comb of civilisation, to the dressing-table, but are carried in their ears.

I had undoubtedly by this time impressed the chief favourably, and my host asked me to inoculate his herd of cattle. The operation is more difficult than

that which I have seen practised on dogs at home. The mode of doing it here is by cutting a nitch in the animal's tail, not very far from the end, and sufficiently deep to cause a wound, into which is inserted some of the matter taken from any infected animal: it is much preferred when it is taken from *the lungs* of a diseased beast. If this acts properly the portion of the tail rots off, and is regarded as being by far the most efficacious preventive to all disorders exhibiting symptoms of cattle-plague, and a specific remedy against rinderpest itself, which is more frequently called out there "lung-sickness." The Kaffir, who suffers very much from it at times, always declares that the Dutch were the first importers of it, and with some truth, as it was said to have been unknown till brought out by an importation of Fatherland bulls. We were occasionally startled by most distressing intelligence of accidents to sportsmen, one of which comes within my own experience.

An Englishman, who was out hunting in this neighbourhood, and had outspanned close to a small river, was either sleeping, or very deeply engaged upon some business, when he was sprung upon by a leopard, which carried the poor fellow from the spot in which he had encamped, and succeeded in dragging him right away into the bush. We heard his screams when, indeed, it was too late to have saved him had we been in a position to render any assistance at all. This, however, was not the case, as we were some distance from the spot, and the brute had taken him entirely

out of our reach. When we assembled our forces to go in search of him, we only discovered shreds of his clothes, and drops of blood here and there which we conjectured to be his, shed as he was drawn along vainly clinging to the thorn bushes on either side. A few days afterwards we killed a fine leopard in the neighbourhood, which it was but a poor consolation to regard as the victim of our revenge, though we firmly believed it to be the man-eater, of which we were in quest.

On my return from this distressing chase, I witnessed an extraordinary sight, a parallel to which I had somewhere read, but of which I was very sceptical. A colony of ants set upon a rat, which was literally so taken prisoner by numbers, so mauled, so utterly disorganised, so blinded by these voracious insects, and so perfectly stupefied by the suddenness and violence of these earth-born hordes of pigmies, as never once to utter even a squeak ; and in a very short time from the commencement of the attack, Gulliver had given up his life to the Lilliputians, and there was nothing of the rat remaining but its skeleton. As I said, I had before been sceptical of the energies and power of these ants, but it is difficult to doubt one's own eyes.

The intermixture of races is not always effective in the promotion of the best characteristics of the more civilised, of which I had evidence. Several Griquas—that is to say, the descendants of Hottentots, allied with the lowest class of Dutch settlers, and adopting

the nomadic customs of the former—came up in their waggons from Nomans-land. They were wretchedly clothed, and bore signs of poverty and recklessness. They had with them large numbers of miserable-looking horses, scarcely capable of any active service for draught or riding, besides cattle and skins, which they were carrying for bartering purposes, and which were exchanged for food, clothing, or oxen, on their route. Many of these people bore fire-arms. I found them almost without exception far below the average of the natives of Africa. They were exceedingly dirty; and both men and women were very much addicted to quarrelling. They contrasted badly with my friends; for they were given to drinking and smoking. They are despised by the Kaffirs, who barely recognise them as belonging to a civilised race. They will never work for them, as they are inhospitable, ungenerous, cunning, and unscrupulous in their dealings with strangers; and I have no hesitation in saying that I would far sooner place confidence in the most barbarous of the South Sea Islanders, or trust myself with the wildest tribe of Kaffirs, than amongst these people, whose mixture of race is a snare to the ignorant and unwary. The women endeavour to make themselves toilettes, after the fashion of their civilised progenitors, and strive to fascinate by putting on large dirty crinolines and other shreds and patches of finery. Their dirt is not rendered less revolting by some curious articles of clothing; and shoes and stockings they do not wear.

In this vicinity, too, very large snakes abound, and you will constantly see them entwined round trees. I should rather say you will not see them, for they are very difficult to discover, in colour and shape they are so like the branches.

The proverb of the "cat's paw" is neatly turned by custom upon the monkeys. Kaffirs retain a few baboons for the purpose of finding those roots, herbs, or fungi, which may serve for food or nourishment. These animals are kept very short of food, in order that they may become greatly self-dependent for subsistence. They are taken out with a thong of hide fastened round their waist or loins, for they are too cunning to be allowed to go alone. Hunger makes them search for roots, and when they have hit upon any spot peculiarly fruitful in these products, the native takes possession, and only gives the baboon just as much as he thinks good for him. It is better to say just sufficient to keep up a stimulating process, so that renewed appetite may induce him to search for more. These roots are very injurious to the Kaffir, but he is above childish considerations of dysentery and other ills, if they only agree with his palate.

This district up the Umzimkulu river would be about the best locality that I know of for settling, as it combines the advantages of a pastoral country with the luxuriance of tropical growth. The Kaffirs are very civil and well-behaved here, and their labour can be obtained at a very small remuneration. The

country abounds in antelopes of all descriptions, and mealies can be bought from the natives at a trifling cost, so that no one need die of starvation.

As dancing is a national amusement, these Kaffirs frequently had war-dances in my honour, in which I occasionally joined for a short time. When tired, I was allowed to retire to a mat, on which the Chief remained the whole period, criticising the beauty of his women, and remarking upon the peculiarities of his girls. As they passed and repassed in Indian file, he pointed out to me those who were possessed of the greatest attractions. His notion of the *seat* of beauty in woman may be guessed from the Hottentot Venus, but I did not agree with him upon that score. He likewise directed my attention to those whom he considered the "belles;" but, however reluctantly, as I thought they were not worthy of the appellation, I ventured to differ with him. This dancing mania was usually carried out with the same accessories, and I will endeavour therefore to give here a general idea of what takes place. About two hundred girls dressed merely in necklaces, and an equal number of men, dressed with a little more regard to our views of decency, would assemble from miles round the kraal to participate in these festivities. The length of time they are kept up I have before mentioned, and as the "breaking up" draws near, all become more vigorous and excited, so that at the conclusion the company presents the appearance of having been dragged, or of having just walked, through

water, besmeared with grease. It will not be polite to say more than that this is owing to their exertions. The men from these kraals wore more clothes for the dances than I had yet seen, owing, I think, to the plentiful supply of large game in this locality, which causes skins to be easily obtainable. The variety of colour was exceedingly pretty, and the diversity of the masculine costume was astonishing; and their heads were most gorgeously decorated with ostrich plumes. It certainly was a grand spectacle to witness, and a most peculiar effect was given by all the girls clapping their hands simultaneously. The sound echoed round the high towering mountains, and was so multiplied, that the one beat had not ceased before another came. The numbers in which they come together for these occasions is also inconceivable. I have often counted as many as two thousand Kaffirs dancing together—a scene which can scarcely be imagined by an English person, whose views are bounded by decorum or space.

Though not free from the little vanity of personal adornment, they are certainly not particular with their hair; it is never disturbed by brush or comb. The people in a very friendly way help each other out of those natural difficulties which belong to such a state; and those who are conversant with Mr. Buckland's account of his own monkeys will understand me. I have seen a young man bending over his "fiancée's" hair for an hour at a time, flattering and love-making

combined with other occupations of a less intellectual kind.

When a man loses a number of cows (and this is the greatest loss he can sustain), or has been subject to any injury, he never broods over his troubles; for a single day he looks the picture of misery and despair; he will not look at nor speak to any one, nor touch food; but by the following morning all his sorrows have vanished, and the subject of grief will never be reverted to again. This is the true "*sapiens est rex*" of the poet. He looks upon things in the clear light of philosophy, and carries out the motto, "*che sara, sara.*" He sees no use in making his life gloomy, or dwelling upon unhappy subjects. If not religious, he is nearly so. Naturally he has much common sense, but not quite sufficient to overcome all his foolish superstitions and prejudices of country and of nature. If you are ill, the Kaffir makes a very kind nurse, and waits upon you day and night as well as he can. His sympathy is quite amusing; for should you happen to be in pain, and wince, he immediately puts himself into a similar position, adopting doubtless a civilised maxim as his own, that the sincerest flattery consists in the closest imitation. It is his mode of expressing that he feels with you as well as for you.

CHAPTER XV.

A Sugar-planter on the Ifafa.—At Sunset.—Hippopotamus trapping. Storks.—Ipiti-bok.—Blesbok.—Up the Ifafa river.—Escape from an Alligator.—Bees.—Moths.—Butterflies.—Sheep.—Danger of Ant-heaps.—Ants.—Kaffir Doctor.—A Picnic.—A Shark.—Attack on a Python.—Accident to a Sugar Waggon.—Kaffirs' treatment of Coolies.—An Alligator hunt.—Laid up with the Zulu fever.—Exclusive Christianity.

HAVING spent several months with my friend the "inkosi," inclination again led me to wander; though it was with no little regret that I bade him adieu, and once more "trekked" onwards to the lovely district of the Ifafa river, where I clothed myself again like a Christian.

Here I visited a settler, whose house was built upon the banks of the most picturesque part of the river. This man was a good specimen of what a settler ought to be. He had formerly been a large grazier near Richmond; but he had been compelled to leave that place in consequence of the ravages of the lung-complaint in his herds, by which he was absolutely ruined; and after wandering about for some time he finally settled upon the Ifafa. By good luck he had a grant of land by the Natal Government, on which he set up a sugar

plantation; hitherto it had appeared to succeed very well. He had six sons, two of whom were always employed in shooting, to keep the house supplied with game; the other four, with his two daughters, superintended the operations of the natives. I saw about two hundred and forty of them hard at work, cutting cane, and two hundred more were taking it to the mill, which is a very favourite employment with Kaffirs. This is the only instance where I observed women with any influence over them in the way of work; but these two daughters certainly had great authority, and exercised it to some purpose. The crop of sugar was magnificent.

Mr. M—— has just commenced a coffee plantation, which, contrary to my pre-conceived notions on the subject, I feel certain will also succeed, and be profitable. It was a perfect hive of industry at the time I refer to, and it was charming to watch such a number of busy hands at work.

I was told that there were here no less than a hundred kinds of wood, all of a hard nature; the growth of some kinds of which is very singular and rapid. Some day I trust there will be a good trade done, by making timber an export of some value to England.

The sunset here was the most glorious sight I ever beheld. I always contrived to be on some elevation at the time of its setting, that I might enjoy the wondrous change of colour in the African sky. After-

wards it was my custom to wander to the river-side, as I was interested in watching the quantities of wild fowl that came down to the water for their night's repast. By waiting in ambush we were able to make some good bags of widgeon, no unimportant tit-bit to add to our supper.

In consequence of the scarcity of powder and shot, and its additional expense from the heavy duty we had to pay upon it, we were chary of it; and as it was, independently of this, very troublesome to obtain, for a magistrate's order had first to be procured before we were allowed to become possessed of it, many a good day's sport was marred. Having bagged our widgeon a death-like stillness reigned while the sun sank to rest. The peaceful twilight is soon disturbed by the occasional roar of a leopard, and then follows the incessant and discordant croaking of the "donder-paade," or monster toad, whose voice was predominant amid the splashing of the large game in the water. Whoever has noticed these things will not easily forget them.

I remember one day two large hippopotami got into a mealy garden, and the destruction they caused was wonderful to behold. The Kaffirs vowed vengeance, and made up their minds to trap one, or both, of these ugly monsters; and the manner in which they set about it was ingenious, and, to me, novel; possibly it is so to the reader. It was done by making a large noose, which was tied to several trees; then, by

fixing this across their path they secured the female as she was going upon a foraging expedition. In struggling she tore a large tree up by its roots; not so extraordinary: for I may here remark that these trees have no tap-root, but all run along the surface. The Kaffirs then proceeded to get a bough of a tree and thrust it into the animal's mouth, in order to keep it open. By this method they contrived, with their usual ingenious cruelty, to throw some assagais down its throat, and so they killed her by degrees. They thereupon commenced cutting up the carcass as soon as it fell, and feasted abundantly upon its warm flesh. This they consider a great delicacy. I was induced to partake of some, because I was very hungry, but I may observe that I had it cooked first, and that it tasted to me not unlike the kidney end of a loin of veal. The hide was dried and cut up into reins and whips, which are exported to the Australian colonies, where there is a good market for them.

It is curious to see in the shallow parts of the Ifafa the storks catching reptiles; and the patience and perseverance they evince are remarkable. For hours together they stand upon one leg gazing into the water, and when at last they spy a fish, down go their long beaks, and they never miss the object aimed at. In an instant the victim is brought up, and an amusing contest between other less fortunate storks ensues for the "bonne-bouche." There are several handsome varieties of these birds. Now and then, after the heat of the day,

between two and three o'clock, or as evening approaches, Lilliputian herds, of about fifteen "ipiti-bok" in each, are to be seen timidly coming to drink at the river-side, and cooling their slender little legs in the shallows. It is interesting to watch a doe with its fawn frisking about, which is the most graceful little animal I have ever beheld. But even beauty such as theirs cannot save them; and it is sad to think how many enemies these little beauties have. Not only are they obnoxious to the attacks of beasts and birds of prey, and I have seen the eagles which infest the kloofs, from the ridges of these solitudes (where the male bird is always reconnoitring) pounce down upon them; but natives are fond of hunting them, and kill great numbers, either as an amusement or for food. It is whilst drinking that they are most easily caught.

Then a small herd of blesbok come to refresh themselves; in considerable haste and terror they cross the river, and are not seen again until they are observed rounding a distant hill. How often have I seen in the neighbourhood of these rivers the Kaffirs hunt these bucks, which, when they have once taken to the river, never survive long. The view-halloo given by these people is different from our "Tally-ho;" it may be heard a long way off, though I can give no conception of it, and in its way, is quite as thrilling, invigorating, and refreshing to the spirits. I have many a time laughed at the humorous scenes and cheery customs of these people, so unhappy, so wicked, so much to be

pitied for their wants and deficiencies ; yet, strange to say, in my humble opinion the brightest of all creatures who live without responsibility, and die apparently without fear.

I went up this river, attended by a Kaffir, in a most primitive kind of punt, which was hollowed out from a large log of wood. I amused myself with fishing and with making general observations on the scenery. I was induced to look up into a neighbouring tree in consequence of the great noise that the monkeys were making. It was not long before I espied a large green snake, much resembling a cucumber in colour, with a most diabolical head ; it had caught one of these unfortunate monkeys in its too-loving embrace, and was covering it over with that very horrible slime, which I have already mentioned, previous to gorging it. The distressed look of the poor animal was really sad to witness ; none of its friends were bold enough to attempt a rescue, but they sat upon the branches of the adjoining trees—as they always do in danger—keeping up an incessant chattering. The Kaffir told me it was considered a good omen for a snake to kill a monkey, but could not assign any reason for it. We did not ask the monkeys. Shortly after this, seeing a very large snake lying under a tree, I was tempted to get out of the punt and have a look at it. I found it was of a similar green colour to the last, and it measured quite ten feet long ; it was in a torpor, having evidently but recently swallowed some animal ;

perhaps a monkey too. Such a reptile as this, I thought, ought not any longer to exist; so taking my attendant's assagai (who ran off, hiding his face) I struck the reptile with it through the back of its neck, and pinned it to the ground. "Efflavit animam," which smelt very badly. In other words, less classical, it emitted a large quantity of wind, which produced a most fearful stench. On returning the weapon to my attendant, he declined to profit by my courtesy; and perhaps he was right. In fact, he refused to touch it again, in consequence of its having killed a snake, so I threw it away. I always dreaded these snakes, and they appeared to be as common as black-beetles in a London house. On another occasion there was a general noise of monkeys and birds of prey; they were all apparently in a great state of excitement, in consequence of a very large alligator. When I first saw him I took him for a piece of rock, projecting from the surface of the water. My Kaffir, with his quick eye, soon discovered what it was, and struck me so violently upon my back as almost to send me headlong out of the punt—an African mode of directing my attention to the monster. Without any further warning, for he seemed to consider language thrown away upon me, he jumped off and swam to the bank, holding my gun in one hand over his head, and I immediately followed him. The moment he landed he fired at the brute from the bank, in order to divert its attention from me; for it had already

noticed me, and appeared to be moving in my direction. However, the shot had clearly taken effect, as in a short time the water was coloured with blood, and the monster had dived, never, I regret to say, to appear again. My Kaffir did not share my regret, as he had a great dread of getting into the belly of an alligator, or of taking up his quarters in the bowels of a snake.

I observed invariably that during the hot sun of three o'clock in the day, all the reptile world seemed to be upon the move.

My man discovered a quantity of splendid honey, which he found by watching the direction the bees took after leaving the flowers; this fellow, with his naked eye, followed them down to the hole where the nest was, and proceeded to cut out the comb. He did so without any difficulty as these bees do not sting. I had some trouble in preventing him from eating the honey, as Kaffirs are particularly fond of everything sweet. They always have good, sound teeth in spite of their propensity, and their sight is something marvellous. I have never once met with a blind Kaffir.

The variety of butterflies and moths is very great and beautiful; I think more varied than that of the Brazils. A good collection of the latter could be made, even whilst lying in bed, with a light in the room, and by skilful handling of the net. It is a curious fact that the same coloured moth or butterfly is rarely seen

twice ; the night moths have a flight somewhat similar to that of the bat ; and I have seen a moth in Natal something between a bird and its own species, having the same hybrid appearance as the common bat.

It is an interesting and happy sight to see the young Kaffir boys bringing their cattle to water, and playing the while wild and singular melodies upon reed pipes. These boys climb the mountains with the greatest facility. On the sides of the hills you will observe perhaps upwards of two hundred cows at a time, which, with their calves, are being driven to be milked. Only a small quantity is taken from each cow for the children, the remainder is left for the calves.

Here I saw some Kaffir sheep, a breed of animals with large ears, having the appearance of a cross with the goat ; but they do not pay any attention to sheep breeding, as it has not been found to answer.

In many parts of the colony so numerous are the ant-heaps that it is difficult to go many paces without meeting them ; it becomes dangerous for the horseman who is not acquainted with his ground, as in galloping fast the horse is very likely to get its leg into one of the holes made by the ant-bear, and either fall or severely injure itself ; in all probability the accident would be an unpleasant one for the rider. The old colonists upon a "new arrival" look forward with great enjoyment to meeting him the next morning to hear his account, and to criticise his experience, of the

ants during the night, which are wont to swarm in his bedroom, over the walls, in his boxes, in the bed, on his head and face, and in fact all over his body, biting him almost to madness. He is also tormented by enormous cockroaches, mosquitos, and other insects far too numerous to mention. The second night he provides himself with a large fine net, which is fastened over his head when he gets into bed, and thus alone he protects himself from his tormentors.

I once witnessed a colony of ants, near a mealy garden, preparing for a rainy day ; long lines of them were returning to the heap, each one bearing with it a grain of Indian corn, in many cases much larger than himself. They looked to me like a long line of yellow beads moving, as their bodies were not visible.

If a bullock falls in the immediate neighbourhood of an ant-heap, you will very shortly after perceive dense lines of ants travelling up to the dead beast from all sides ; in the space of a day and night all the flesh will be eaten off and carried in quite large pieces by these industrious little insects to their heaps, where they deposit their loads before again returning to the carcass for more.

I passed upon one occasion a rich kraal, where the chief was superintending about a hundred of his men who were hard at work making mealy gardens. He informed me that he intended soon to try the cultivation of sugar. This man, although past the middle age of life, did not possess any wives, at which I was

much astonished, never having before come across a kraal without any; he was certainly an exception (if not a brilliant one) to the rule of the country.

A Kaffir doctor came up demanding from the chief three cows as payment for some wonderful cure he professed to have performed. They were immediately handed over to him without a murmur, as these singular men are held in great respect and awe. His dress was distinguishable, if not *distingué* in our sense of the word; he had suspended from the back of his neck a small skull, an emblem of wisdom and of peculiar skill in his profession. Several other magical charms were hung about different parts of his person; such as the claws of eagles and other birds, the dried feet of lions, and upon the point of his assagai was carried a small bunch of herbs. As this strange-looking man travelled about from kraal to kraal he sang songs of an imaginative and poetical character, but altogether devoid of music. I believe that when these men cure snake bites it is more from accident than knowledge; whatever the remedy may chance to be, the process was always concluded by the doctor spitting down the patient's throat. This was supposed to counteract the venom of the serpent, on homœopathic principles of "*similia similibus curantur.*" One night, whilst taking my rest in a kraal in the Ifafa country, I was aroused from my slumbers by a young Kaffir suddenly jumping up from his mat, who commenced singing and dancing about in a state of

considerable excitement. This appeared to be a signal for all the other boys to rouse themselves ; so they set to work and lit a fire, round which they squatted, singing all through the night, much to my annoyance. It appeared that this young boy had been visited by a propitious dream, and this was the usual mode of celebrating it. The old people did not rebuke them, but looked upon it as the natural result of such a piece of good fortune.

But the pleasures of idleness always pall, and after some length of time I very reluctantly gave up this charming and agreeable life upon the Ifafa, and went to spend a short time again with Mr. A——, who resided about one day's " trek " distant. I amused myself by shooting buck, which was plentiful ; no great change for the better ! varying it occasionally by assisting my friend in bartering skins and poultry ; the latter he forwarded to D'Urban for consumption on board ship. During my visit we had a picnic, which proved more exciting than picnics are usually. The circumstances were as follow : Close to where we were seated, two sea-cows, or hippopotami, began the entertainment by fighting, and set up a most hideously-melancholy roar ; whilst partaking of our meal, and listening to these signs of combat, the natives came running up to inform us that they had discovered a shark in the river, which report I was loth to believe until I had seen it with my own eyes, for we were quite five-and-twenty miles from the sea. It appeared, nevertheless,

that this voracious brute had come up with the tide, and had got into a hole in the bed of the river from which it could not extricate itself owing to the ebb of the tide. Of course it became a duty with idlers there as here to kill something; so the men commenced throwing assagais at it, and after a lengthened attack, succeeded in killing it. Upon getting the brute to land, we found it measured fully six feet from head to tail; the jaws were cut out, and as all the ladies wanted them, they drew lots. The Kaffirs make very pretty ornaments of these jaws, as wreaths, necklaces, and ear-rings.

I was one day wandering about in a small wood covered with vegetation, when I came in contact with a large python, which must have been twelve or thirteen feet long, a very unpleasant settler to meet, as I have before pointed out. It was coiled round the stump of a tree as usual in circles, with its head turning in my direction. As I approached it made a horrid hissing noise, and uncoiled one of its rings; and upon my again retiring to a more respectful distance, it placed itself in a fighting attitude, so I put myself upon the defensive and fired. The shot, however, did not strike him, and only enraged it the more, for it untwisted its whole length and made at us. My man put a large assagai into my hands, which I found more useful than the rifle, for I had nothing but bullets. As a rule I found small sparrow shot the best thing to kill these serpents with. With the assagai I managed

to disable it, though I felt in mortal terror all the time. The skin we took away with us as a trophy. The immense size of these snakes has been frequently called in question, but I know not why there should be any doubt upon the subject, since the fact has been authenticated by so many eye-witnesses. They are found in great numbers along the coast, although they are becoming fewer in consequence of the destruction of the herbage by fire once a year, which takes place for the purpose of keeping down vegetation. I have seen some miles of country burning, and the fire swallowing up snakes and rats, and every kind of vermin. They become bewildered, and rush into the midst of the flames. The following fact may serve to show how prolific vegetation is; that, on the third day, the ground will again be carpeted with beautiful flowers and ferns.

Bustards we found to be very plentiful; and I was fortunate in shooting large numbers of them. One day, whilst engaged in this occupation, a Kaffir informed me that a waggon laden with sugar had got off the road into a bog, in consequence of the inability of the driver, and the violence of two unbroken oxen in the span. I at once proceeded to the spot indicated, where I found about fifty of these tawny fellows sitting upon their haunches discussing the catastrophe, wondering whether it would not be better at once to kill one of the bullocks which had stuck in the mud. I just came up in time to prevent this design from being

carried into effect, by which means I stopped the gratification of their appetites. I ordered them to cut a quantity of grass, to be placed on the top of the waggon to protect it from rain, as night was fast approaching, and the appearance of the clouds indicated that a storm was not very distant. In which surmise I was correct; for by the time the top of the waggon was covered over and the oxen turned off, a violent storm came up. I took shelter underneath the waggon, encircling myself in a blanket, and guarding the load of sugar until the owner arrived, which was not for three days. I felt perfectly convinced that had I quitted the spot these natives would soon have eaten it up. Under present circumstances it amused me much to watch the manner in which they handled the bags. With the idea of leaving a good taste upon their fingers, they prolonged the business as much as possible. They were tolerably successful in this, for sugar is one of their greatest luxuries.

I spent a most melancholy time in this bog, which swarmed with iguanas, toads, and other horrible reptiles. At last I began to fancy myself a toad, and was wondering when I should croak. I was no less than a week in the mud, for it took three days to find the bullocks, and four more to mend the waggon, during which time I had to thrash six of the men for eating sugar. The poor owner, who was just upon the verge of bankruptcy, was too distressed even to thank me for all the trouble I had taken.

I considered this a melancholy instance of the settler's want of practical knowledge. No man of any experience would have entrusted a load of this description to natives without an European to look after them. After the waggon was put in order, and had continued its journey, I went a short distance to visit a settler, who had in early life been a plumber and glazier in London, and had set up near the Ifafa river as a sugar-planter. He was a most persevering fellow; but I do not think, for some reason or other, that he had got on well, as he told me he had recourse to borrowing money. I presume that it was the old failing—that of not having enough capital to start upon: the interest of borrowed money had swallowed up his incomings. He appeared at this time to be getting on more prosperously, as at daybreak the next morning I was awoke by the noise of three hundred Kaffirs, who were swarming to their work like so many bees round a hive. He had begun by employing about fifty coolies; but the Kaffirs, in their great aversion to these people, drove them off, and molested them in every possible way, frequently catching one, and with their usual ingenuity in wickedness, knocking his eye out. They said they did this in order that he might see better out of the other—a grim species of humour, and not original. My host was blessed with nine lovely daughters, the eldest of whom, tradition stated, had run away with a Scripture reader, a gentleman of a most unprepossessing appearance. The father,

who was very indignant, said that men of this class should never enter his house again. He has but little opinion of missionary self-restraint, but much of its dishonest enterprise. He kindly suggested an alligator hunt, which I was only too glad to have the chance of joining. Accordingly, soon after "tiffin," we started, accompanied by his unmarried daughters, who were most anxious to witness the sport. They all mounted horses without saddles; and mustering, together with his own men, fully three hundred, we proceeded to the river. Between two rocks we found a huge alligator, which appeared to be either asleep or fatigued with his exertions. We immediately sent two dogs in to bait him, which roused the beast, and caused him quietly to open his mouth, as if to catch a dog. They were quicker than he was, however, and so escaped uninjured. He dived under the water; but now his chance for life was gone, the river being too shallow for escape, as the tide had not yet come up. The beast finding himself baffled, again showed fight, and rushed at one of the men open-mouthed. He fortunately had an old sack with him, filled with earth and sticks, which he thrust down the monster's throat, and which was greedily swallowed. Each time the jaws were opened, the mouth received a number of assagais, which sometimes took effect there, sometimes in its eyes. After three hours' sharp fighting, it was fairly worried, tired out, and finally killed. When dead, the Kaffirs extracted its teeth, which, as usual,

were reserved for ornaments. Crowns are made of these by cutting a piece of wood round, and by inserting the teeth. An old Kaffir told me that he had seen a large leopard seized by an alligator, and that the latter had absolutely bitten him in two.

While riding home after the hunt, in crossing a river, my horse suddenly got into a deep hole; but as he had several times been in a similar predicament, I left him to take his own course, and he landed me safely upon the opposite side, rather refreshed than otherwise by my unexpected immersion.

I thought I was tolerably well seasoned by this time to the climate; but during my sojourn in the Ifafa district, I was laid up with Zulu fever, which I attributed to cold caught while sleeping upon that dreary bog underneath the sugar-waggon, keeping guard. I had a severe attack, and was reduced to almost a skeleton, and it was a long time before I had sufficiently recovered so as to be able to get about and take my accustomed exercise. The Kaffirs nursed me with great kindness, and daily brought pine-apples, oranges, and bananas, which grew in the neighbourhood plentifully.

I received letters from England, which were very cheering; though the *Chelmsford Chronicle* is not more lively than country papers in general, I remember it was a great amusement and comfort to me during my illness, and I read it over at least ten times, including every advertisement.

Divine service was performed on Sundays, and the white settlers came from a great distance to attend it. The Kaffirs were never admitted into the church here, because the peculiarity of dark men is objectionable to the olfactory nerves of a Christian congregation. It is presumed that there is a purgatorial process between this world and the next, which may enable us to sit together in heaven, or what will become of the poor Kaffirs? Europeans born in this colony are called Africanders.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Upper Umzimkulu.—The Dutch.—Kaffir Circumcision.—Domestic Animals trained to quick Movement.—Goats.—Chegoes.—Dogs.—Fight between a Bull-dog and a Leopard.—Nomans-land.—Kaffir Life.—Their kindness to a Friend in Affliction.—Ant-eggs.—Candle-making.—Immense Spiders.—A Boy killed by a Puff-adder.—African Griffins shooting Goats.—Kaffir Good-nature.—Visit to Baboons.

MR. W—— came to visit me, bringing with him a capital horse, which he said was for me, if I would accompany him to the Upper Umzimkulu district. Feeling that I required bracing up, and that change of air would be beneficial to my health, I accepted the invitation, and succeeded in obtaining ten good dogs to take with us, one of which was a bull-dog. We had likewise a relay of fine horses, and a good supply of powder and shot. My friend killed several head of buck on our journey; but I reserved myself for a few days, not wishing to overtax my strength, and knock myself up again.

Upon our arrival we were greeted by the natives with great respect, whom on further acquaintance we found to be very much wilder than any I had before met with. After travelling about this country for some

days, we came upon game in great abundance, and made excellent bags.

We met an old chief, whom we found very courteous and much given to hospitality. He was quite anxious that we should build up a kraal and settle in his district.

These Kaffirs appeared to be well-acquainted with the movements of the Dutch Boers and Moshesh, between whom war had commenced. This quarrel would have been a great source of gossip to the news-seeking inhabitants of Natal, had not the clerical community been engaged at that moment in a set discussion upon the subject of Bishop Colenso. Apparently there were faults on both sides, as the Dutch were accused by the Kaffirs of making raids upon their tribes; in other words, of killing and carrying off their children. And Kaffirs were accused by the Dutch of stealing their cattle. They are so far like petty German States, jealous of each other, and always hoping to obtain the English ear. Policy would say, fight it out among yourselves; but humanity teaches us a better lesson. A good fight is, in some sense, wholesome; for, supposing the vanquished are compelled to fly over the border, the trial is less than might be imagined: there is plenty of room for them. We must not forget that the Dutch are the mainstay of this colony, as well as of the Old Cape Colony, and the Trans Vaal trade is a rich one with us, inasmuch as I have seen a delay of Dutch waggons perfectly

paralyse commerce in Pietermaritzburg. I find now, among the present topics of conversation in England on the settlers, and their differences with the natives, that the Boers have been carrying off Kaffir children to the other side of the Drakenberg: I do not believe this story; for upon one occasion I remember a similar report arising, and being much talked about in the Colony. I made myself acquainted with the exact spot where the event was supposed to have taken place, and I had the curiosity to visit this kraal in order to judge for myself of the truth or falsehood of the report. I found it to be entirely without foundation, as the whole kraal was intact.

The Boer is a parsimonious and peculiar person, but practical in all common affairs of life. I regard him as the greatest colonist in the world; for he is able to make a living where any one else would starve. He appears to be always working his way into the interior, making good homesteads amongst the wilds, where he has great difficulties to contend with; far greater, indeed, than most settlers would imagine, who do not penetrate so far. Success always attends the thrifty Boer, who is a hospitable and abstemious man; and to his credit be it said, that it is a rare occurrence to see a Dutchman drink to excess.

His house is, as a rule, one-storied, well-built, and white-washed. His garden is in keeping with his requirements, producing principally vegetables, the favourite of which is the onion. His fruits are oranges,

apples, and peaches ; and from the latter he makes the celebrated white rum, because he is not able to procure sugar-canes.

He also succeeds in making excellent butter and cheese, which find a ready market in the Mauritius, for its cleanly appearance. His great *forte* is his management of cattle. He left Natal to those who prefer a nearly tropical climate, and "trekked" over the Drakenberg, where cattle thrive. His flocks do well, and are remunerative in the Trans Vaal, where I have seen as many as sixty waggons laden with wool and other produce, for shipment at Port Elizabeth for England. He laughs at the English idea of imagining that sheep can be made to answer in Natal, well knowing that it is essentially a hair-growing, and not a wool-growing country.

His children born in the Colony are usually handsome. The girls are plump and have fair complexions, the men are particularly fine young fellows, very fond of riding, and almost living in their saddles. He is brave and obstinate by nature : frequently in small detachments, and sometimes single-handed, these Boers have repulsed countless numbers of the wild Kaffirs.

He is accused of being cruel to the Kaffir, but I remember never to have seen a sign of it, excepting where there was great provocation and necessity. But the truth is that the Kaffir does not like a Dutch master. He is difficult to move with reference to new plans, has notions of his own as regards work, and

when consulted as to improvements, shows himself a very Walpole of debate, "leave well alone."

Kaffir boys, at the age of fifteen, are the subjects of an institution equivalent to circumcision amongst the Jews, and a like kind of religious observance is practised among the girls at the age of twelve or thirteen. Great pomp and ceremony attend these rites. The chiefs of all the kraals congregate and bring with them the boys who have attained the proper age; their bodies are white-washed and painted with curious mixtures, they also have to wear fantastical dresses, and carry long rods in their hands, and go about in this manner until the end of the moon. At the expiration of that time the clothes are thrown off, their bodies are washed, and anointed with grease, and their physical disabilities are no more. The Chief then harangues them, and gives each boy some assagais, saying that he considers them warriors, and that they are eligible for marriage. He, in like manner, praises the girls, and hopes they will make good, hard-working wives. When this part of the ceremony is over, great festivities take place; oxen are killed, and with dancing and singing they keep up the festival until daybreak. The boys, after their quasi-circumcision, begin to assume the gravity of the man; and on great occasions show their appreciation of their adoption of the "toga virilis." Extreme vanity appears to be their marked characteristic at the age of eighteen. Often have I seen the young Kaffir, as he walks, turn round

and look admiringly at himself from head to foot, whose body is carefully polished with grease—no otherwise than the well-anointed athlete of the Campus Martius, or the perfumed dandy of Bond Street or the Row. More especially is the Kaffir proud if he have already suspended by strings a few small birds from his back. Then he pulls these strings to make the birds flutter around him, giving himself at least as many *airs* as graces.

The girls stand in groups at the kraals to see the beaux, and make their remarks of admiration or the reverse. Negotiations sometimes commence now with reference to marriage; but in most cases the bold parent gives the daughter to the gentleman of his own selection, in other words, to him who possesses the largest number of cows, rather than to the choice of his daughter's heart. The graceful groupings of these girls are quite worthy of a scene in an English or Italian ballet, and the girl most conspicuous for *embon-point* is supposed to be the belle.

There is a great quantity of Indian corn grown in this district of the Umzimkulu, which supplies the requirements of the natives for the next six months. They can always rely on two crops a year if the ground be judiciously managed. The women grind this corn into meal, which, when mixed with milk, makes excellent porridge. A good harvest disposes the people to be idle and independent; but their great love of cattle urges them, on the other hand, to work: matrimony

may be said to be the great spur, for they are well aware that they can never be married until they have cows with which to buy wives.

The cows, sheep, and goats, are all trained from early infancy to quick movement. If these animals do not get on as fast as the drover wishes them, they are unmercifully belaboured with a stout stick; and the drovers think that anyone wishing them to linger must be a downright fool. Nothing can induce a Kaffir to allow them to move along a road slowly, to browse on the herbage, or take their leisure: the only place where he at all gives in, is in the kraal.

I saw here large quantities of goats, which grow to a great size; and often number as many as four hundred head. They are as profitable cattle as can be had, giving little trouble, and their market price is ten shillings a head. Their skins are valuable, and find a ready market. They are supposed to pay better than sheep upon the coast.

Horses are not bred here. They live a very short time; and those which are used are brought down from the Trans Vaal. They are much worried by the insect called "chegoe," which is a great nuisance to man and beast. If one of these insects gets under the skin of the animal, it feeds upon the blood until it bursts itself, causing a bad sore, exceedingly difficult to cure. After the horseman has dismounted from his journey he may be seen to make a minute search over his own body first, to ascertain whether there are

any of these disgusting insects upon his person. They are about the size of a flea when they enter the skin, but soon swell to five times their original size. Children suffer most painfully from them.

It is a curious circumstance, and one that is at least worthy of notice, that imported dogs do not thrive well in Natal. They lose their vivacity and become mangy; but they are not subject to hydrophobia, as they are in the Mauritius; in which island I have seen many deaths arise from the bite of dogs. In Natal such a thing has never been known. I do not think that an English dog, as a rule, lives more than three or four months in this climate, but by judiciously crossing it with the Kaffir dog it becomes a valuable companion to the sportsman. The breed most highly esteemed is the bull-dog, when crossed with the Kaffir dog, as it puts courage into an animal otherwise currish, and for tiger-cat hunting exhibits the highest requisites. The natives are always glad to be able to cross their breed with the English dogs. I once had the pleasure of seeing a brindled bull-dog attack a small leopard or tiger-cat, and the fight was most extraordinary. With Kaffir dogs the brute would certainly have killed three out of six, but Patrick seized the leopard by the throat, and remained there, causing the beast to become almost mad with pain and rage; and it was not until I had killed his antagonist that Pat could be made to let go. The Kaffir has himself a wholesome dread of the bull-dog, and that

is the reason why there are very few in the colony. It is a curious fact that no English breed ever becomes quite friendly with the natives, which I attribute to the humming noise they so incessantly make, and to the perpetual motion in which they indulge.

I hardly know what will be done to amuse these people when they have killed all the game on the coast. That and dancing are their only pastimes. Cultivation of the soil indeed is their work, but hunting is their life and happiness.

I now crossed from this part of the Umzimkulu into Nomans-land, a most uninteresting country, abounding in half castes, or, in fact, Hottentots; every one of whom declared that his father was an Englishman. I found them a disagreeable race, disgusting in many ways, and was glad enough to return, after a very short stay, to my old friends the Kaffirs.

I have noticed among the great characteristics of all poor and needy settlers, a restless idea that the farther they go the more they are likely to do. In pursuance of this idea they are continually "trekking" about, as they fancy, to some more favourable spot. If I settled I should endeavour to keep to the coast country of Natal, in preference to the side bordering on Nomans-land. Horses can be obtained in the last-mentioned country at a very low price, but they are poor sickle-hocked, weedy, worthless animals. I would not have one at a gift. But there is fine hunting and good skins can be obtained. A small trade is carried on with

sheep, which are brought up from Port Elizabeth in Algoa Bay.

I believe there has been a Kaffir magistrate appointed to this country.

The Kaffir lives in these solitudes in perfect happiness, envying no one. When a young man, and out in service, he looks forward to the time that he will be able to return to his kraal, to live undisturbed, surrounded by his wives and herds of cattle. A rational prospect, and to him a heaven upon earth! Nothing can equal the happiness of these unsophisticated beings, who are by nature harmless just so long as they are unmolested. I have, while residing amongst them, observed as their strongest characteristics their common sense and great idea of justice. The young men are, like ourselves, weak and unwise; this is natural to young men of all countries; but the older men, whom the missionaries used to call the "lost savage," often illustrated to me the great social problems of civilised life. They very well knew what they were about in the government of their kraals; their business was always undertaken with an eye to profit and an avoidance of loss; and they were just in their dealings without the trouble of a balance-sheet.

In all their meetings the great courtesy they exhibit towards each other is singularly marked in its character, showing us that they have not required civilisation to teach them this. Moshesh, the great chief of the Basutos, once gave me his idea of civilisation,

which he defined as "the art of never being contented."

Friends are invited to "outchualla" drinking, and occasionally they have regular "drunken bouts;" but the Kaffir is very amusing, and extremely complimentary, when intoxicated. There is generally at these parties some gay young wit, who has at his fingers' ends all the latest "on dits" respecting the numerous alliances which are likely to take place between different kraals. The greater part of this sort of news is invented, as in England; but it has such a harmless, amusing character, that they have the good taste to appear to believe every word that is told them, for fear of putting a damper upon the meeting. It is very interesting to watch the Kaffirs listening to one of these orations. They squat all round the speaker, and keep their eyes fixed upon him, scarcely moving a muscle, but occasionally giving vent to their feelings by saying, "*ya, ya,*" whilst he puts himself into all kinds of attitudes. They are wonderful mimics, and delight in the opportunity of imitating the voice and manners of people they are speaking about. It is curious to hear their opinions of the white men of the towns. I am bound to admit that they form the most correct ideas of them, certainly not flattering them, and summing up their characters to the letter. They give them nicknames, which stick to them all through the colony. A white man who has ever been in prison in Pietermaritzburg had better for

his own sake leave the colony directly he is liberated, if he is able, as the Kaffirs would never again respect him, and would not attend to a word that he said, or undertake work for him of any kind or description whatever.

A Kaffir will never pass the settler or stranger, if he likes his appearance, without the friendly greeting of "sachabona inkosi," or "hamba gooschly inkosi;" but if he does not approve of his personal appearance, he will pass by without the commonest salutation. I had opportunities of seeing many acts of great kindness that these people showed towards each other; and, as an instance out of many, I will narrate the following fact, which came under my notice. A poor fellow had lost all his cows with lung sickness, and three of his wives died at the same time, I believe from eating the diseased meat of the animals. Unluckily, he had not planted many mealies, so that he was in a true state of bankruptcy. But in this wild and happy condition, there being no assignees, a meeting of the heads of the kraals was called; and, after talking the matter over for some time, they all became silent and thoughtful, evidently considering what had better be done. Suddenly, after a few minutes' deliberation, a man sprang up and exclaimed, "I feel so many cows and calves for you!" then another got up and said how many he felt, a third had a like sensation, and then a fourth, and so on through the august assembly, until the man was again possessed of a very respectable herd of cattle.

The next thing that was done was to burn the unfortunate kraal to the ground, to build a new one about half-a-mile distant from the old site, and to start afresh; and a few days after the meeting above referred to, the different chiefs, attended by their "indunas," might be observed driving the cows to the new habitation of the unfortunate bereft, where they were regaled with outchualla, and made as happy as their generosity deserved or desired.

Up in this remote region, far away from any white man's habitation, the Kaffirs live entirely upon mealies and the buck, varied by an occasional buffalo: their piccaninnies do not take anything else but milk. I remarked that they sometimes ate ants' eggs, which I was persuaded to try. I found them really very good, especially when cooked in a sort of curry, which they prepared themselves.

I was fortunate in escaping the everlasting night-tormentor, the mosquito, which is a greater nuisance here than in many other parts of the south-east. I always wore a kind of helmet made of fine gauze, which my man fastened on when I retired for the night. A candle or lamp cannot be kept alight either inside or outside the hut for many minutes, as the light attracts bats and thousands of insects of all descriptions, which fly directly at it, and rapidly extinguish it.

Kaffirs, I found, were particularly pleased to get candles. I used to make my own; having provided

myself with a mould, I procured a blade of stout grass for a wick. Having laid this into the mould, I then filled it up with fat, which I usually obtained from the buck.

The ticks were fearful here, and the Kaffirs were very careful to see that the hurdle to the door of my hut was put up every night to keep out the puff-adders. I was also cautious myself, before retiring to my mat, to look round and ascertain that there were not any reptiles or spiders concealed. The spiders here grow to an enormous size ; I have seen them as large as tea-saucers, and deadly poisonous. They make their webs so strongly, that were a man to get his fingers entangled in one of them, he would have some difficulty in extricating them before the spider would make its attack, should he be near at hand.

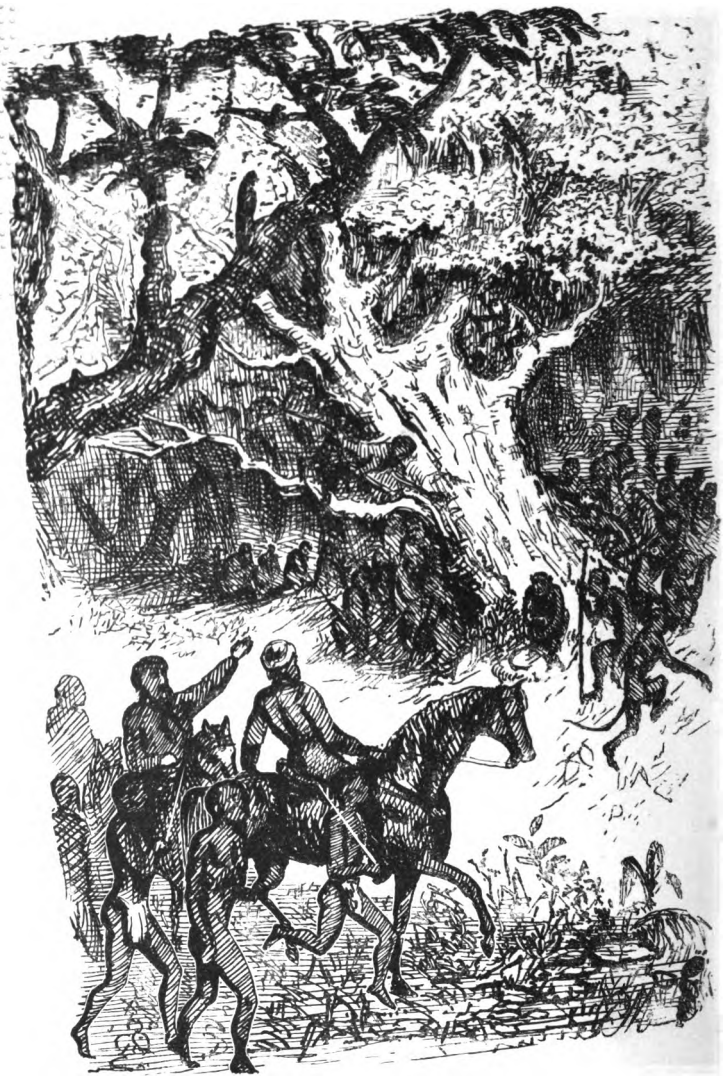
A poor boy was bitten in the heel by one of those fearful and deadly reptiles, the puff-adder, and in a moment he turned nearly white from fear and pain. His mother was perfectly frantic, as nothing could be done for him ; and I can now imagine that I see his poor beseeching face, when I gave him the last drop of brandy I had, telling me he must go to the great "Inkosi in izulu," which meant the Great Chief in heaven. He begged me not to kill the adder, and expressed great fear and anxiety lest I should. I promised I would not, which seemed a great relief to him, as he said it would be a perpetual torment if they went into "izulu" together. He took a farewell of all

his friends, and died apparently without regret in about five hours after the accident. Every night whilst in the Upper Umzimkulu country, I was kept awake by the howling of large game, and the constant splash of the hippopotami in some water close to our kraal.

It is very amusing to see the first appearance of fresh arrivals on the "veldt," where they usually mistake the shaggy Kaffir goat, which wanders about these plains in herds, for wild animals. They consequently proceed to fire at them, which soon brings up a Kaffir, attended by two or three of his wives, with their red mudded heads, to protect their property. Upon seeing these curiosities, wildly throwing their arms about and yelling vociferously, the sportsman fancies he is being applauded for his extreme boldness and dexterity, and shoots a few more, until at last he is made to understand that the Kaffir and his wives are begging and entreating him not to kill these sources of domestic revenue, as they are his goats, and not wild animals at all. The affair is amicably settled by some little present being made to him for the loss of his goats.

The Kaffir is a very good-natured fellow when he thinks injuries are unintentional, but he generally knows, and lets others know, when they are done maliciously. He is a good neighbour, too; and when a friend is ill, he is generally to be seen sitting round the sick man's hut with his wives, or, should a doctor be required, he will travel one or two hundred miles to procure one. He is considerate in all the duties of





RABOONS.

hospitality ; but, when it comes to a matter of business, he will try to cheat you, and it will not be his fault if he does not succeed in doing so : many a time has the little game been tried upon me, and I have found it sometimes necessary to use my shambuck, to bring the impostor to a sense of right.

Hearing that there was a troop of baboons in the neighbourhood, numbering, it was said, about thirty, I went to look at them, attended by some natives. We had not far to walk through the forest, before we discovered them through their loud chattering. We advanced near enough to be able to watch their antics ; but we hid ourselves behind bushes, as they appeared scared at the sight of human beings. It entertained me much to look on at the extraordinary games the parents performed to amuse their young ; and when we emerged from our place of concealment, they set up the most frightful screams. The males rather advanced than retreated, to guard the females, who ran off with their offspring clinging to their necks, or sitting upon their shoulders. This was too tantalising a sight for the Kaffirs, so they showered assagais upon one unfortunate old baboon, and down he fell. Our dogs immediately rushed upon him and made a desperate attack, but the old fellow had sufficient strength to inflict a dreadful wound upon one dog before he died. The rest of the male baboons got up a tree for safety, but the men with their assagais succeeded in wounding and killing six more.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Basuto Country.—The French Bishop and Sisters of Mercy.—
—Female Butchers.—A Fight between two Women.—Ostriches.
—Thaba Bosigo.—My reception by Moshesh.—A Hunting Expedition.—Immense quantity of Game.—Lions.—A Fight.—Hunt for the wounded Lion.—Ostrich Eggs.—Gnu Hunting.—Ostrich Nest.—Giraffes.—Bloemfontein.—Zebras.—An Ostrich Hunt.—Fighting Buffaloes.—A Dance.—Conclusion.

AFTER a sojourn of some months on the Umzimkulu I bade farewell to my friends by letter writing; to more than one on old paper collars, for I was very deficient in a supply of stationery. I thence started once more on a journey, and “trekked” for the Basuto country, of which Moshesh is the chief. From the day I left until that on which I reached Thaba Bosigo I numbered about four months, which time was spent much in the same manner as I have before narrated; that is, in shooting, hunting, and observation of native customs; occasionally stopping in some of the most sequestered and beautiful spots, where many little romantic incidents occurred to enhance the pleasure of my journey.

Every day as we proceeded on our way we found more game, and that of a larger description; and I

remarked everywhere that the Kaffirs were in a great state of excitement, in consequence of the war with Pretorius, who, according to their own account, was about to annihilate them all.

I heard tidings when upon this "trek" of the good Roman Catholic bishop, who had been sent out by the French Government; and I felt proud of such an acquaintance, for I had been introduced to him some months before. He had just returned from Pietermaritzburg, where he had been to bring up six Sisters of Mercy, who had come out as far as the Cape in a French man-of-war, and were thence transferred to an ordinary coasting vessel to D'Urban, from which place these poor ladies had to "trek" right across the colony, over the Drakenberg to the Basuto territory. They were obliged to travel in the usual conveyance of the country, attended only by a few wild Kaffirs. While they were traversing one of the many rivers which crossed their path, unfortunately the waggon got out of its proper track, and stuck in the middle. At this juncture the oxen broke loose, and, as usual, dispersed in all directions, the Kaffirs going after them. These ladies were thus left alone and unprotected for three days. They, luckily, had provisions, and were discovered in this unenviable predicament by some Englishmen, who were "trekking" for Pietermaritzburg, who rendered them every assistance in their power, and escorted them as far as that town, where they were met by the bishop. He was held in extraordinary

estimation for his many virtues by the natives; so much so that Moshesh sent with him a large escort of mounted Kaffirs to protect him on the road.

These Sisters of Mercy had come out all this distance without having had any house provided for them when they should arrive at their destination. They had, therefore, to live out on the open plain, or "veldt," in the waggon, until a fitting habitation could be erected for them. I am not myself a Roman Catholic, but I admire the comparatively practical usefulness of their missionaries, who, in Moshesh's country, as in other places, teach the natives the art of constructing waggons, the proper use of tools, and of various articles of husbandry, and the way to make clothing. They likewise possess that peculiar characteristic of never interfering in political matters, which would be so valuable to our own.

While travelling over the Drakenberg mountains I saw women acting as butchers, killing bullocks themselves, cutting them up, and carrying the flesh in flat baskets upon their heads, while the blood, dripping from the meat, trickled down their faces and bodies. I need not say that this gave them a horrible appearance. These people frequently made themselves drunk by drinking the blood of the newly-slaughtered animals; and at times they gorged the meat to such a disgusting extent that, like the snakes, they lay torpid until it was digested. The old women are so dirty in their habits that they never wash their red

muddled heads at all. They allow the blood to dry upon their faces, which gives them a most offensive appearance, to say nothing of the hideous smell by which the custom is accompanied. During one of these feasts of flesh I witnessed a very spirited fight between two women, who butted at each other with their heads, fairly knocking the wind out of their bodies. This caused great excitement amongst the lookers on, especially the men, who rolled about the ground in paroxysms of mirth, so great was their laughter: they, however, eventually separated the combatants, when they had sufficiently recovered themselves from their appreciation of the sport.

The cattle were not in such good condition here as I had seen them in other parts. We found enormous herds of antelopes, quaggas, and others of the zebra kind. The herbage, indeed, was quite eaten down by the immense numbers of these animals, which accounts for the poverty of the oxen.

We were now coming into one of the finest climates it is possible to conceive. The air was most invigorating and healthy, and the inhabitants appeared to be happy and contented.

I had some easy shots at ostriches, and I succeeded in bringing two to earth. Others I wounded, but only slightly, for they were so excessively wild that after the first shot it was very difficult to get near them. The Dutch, I remarked, paid me more attention when I had killed these two birds than they had previously

done. Being fond of hunting themselves they appreciate good shooting in others. A large business is carried on in ostrich feathers and skins; and the feathers of the goose form a staple trade in these parts. This latter commodity is a valuable export.

I noticed immense flocks of plovers under the Drakenberg. They were the first I had observed. I shot a great many, and found them excellent eating. I frequently had their eggs boiled for breakfast.

The vast plains over which I was travelling are certainly very grand, but produce a sort of melancholy feeling of isolation from one's fellows. You see a few houses built sometimes near together, more frequently scattered about at long intervals. These are by the natives dignified with the names of towns, and are all of the Dutch type. In the stores I am bound to admit almost anything can be got, from a bottle of blacking to a tiger-trap.

After getting over the Drakenberg we "trekked" for Thaba Bosigo, the mountain residence of Moshesh. Upon arriving there I had to wait two days before he would give me an interview. He, however, made his "indunas" see that I had a hospitable reception in the interval. He has for the use of Englishmen a well-fitted European-shaped house, and in this he wished me to take up my quarters. The Kaffirs under him, as the English newspapers may have told my readers, are of a different race, they appear slyer, and, I think, more thievishly disposed than the Zulus. After getting

thoroughly rested, and impatient of waiting any longer without seeing the chief, I sent in a message demanding an interview. It was graciously granted, and I was forthwith requested to attend at his immense kraal. His curiosity was quite as great as my own, and to gratify both I accordingly went at once. As soon as I reached the entrance of the hut I drew myself up in as dignified a manner as possible, and there waited until his Majesty came out. It is a singular fact, and one worth noting, that if any visitor to a kraal allows without rebuke the inattention he may chance to meet with, as of not having a mat offered him, or the neglect of various other observances of etiquette common amongst Kaffirs, he will lose caste.

Upon our greeting each other Moshesh adopted the European style of shaking hands; the first instance I had seen of a Kaffir doing this. For some reason they usually much object to it. He was exceedingly courteous, and begged me to partake of refreshment, which he had prepared after the European fashion. He exhibits, as they all do, a great love of cattle, and an appreciation of their value. He had endless herds, and they were divided into three sets: the white; the Zulu, which are of a sort of mouse colour, like the best of our Alderney breeds; and the Dutch, which are black and white. All around him he had a powerful body-guard, over which he exercised the most absolute power. He is regarded by them as a merciful chief, and is deservedly much beloved. His men have been

accused of making raids into Natal, and stealing cattle; but I do not think that he can possibly help it, and I am sure he would not countenance it. He asked me to join his people in hunting, and was anxious to know whether I had plenty of ammunition and a good gun, as for the kind of sport he intended to give me these things were absolutely necessary. He was always as particular as the most polished host at a battue that I should get my share of shooting and property in the way of skins. The kraals which surrounded his own were lined with the skins of lions, leopards, zebras, and other animals. All his "indunas" seemed very intelligent, and what we call "warm," or well-to-do men. He had had about his court, from time to time, many Europeans, to teach him the art of war, and to instruct him in the more obvious duties of civilisation. I had three trusty Kaffirs, splendid muscular fellows, the best hunting men in the neighbourhood, and the finest I had yet seen; men who seemed entirely made for the severe work of attacking the larger kinds of game. I never met such athletic and dangerous-looking fellows, but their good-natured dispositions and friendly intentions made me feel quite at ease. Occasionally, to please them, I used to allow them to fire off my gun, and they generally brought down whatever they fired at, so inherent in their nature is every capability for sport.

Moshesh, being desirous of showing me really fine sport, determined upon sending me upon a two days'

“trek” farther into the interior, where I could get some good lion-hunting. Early one morning we started, and took with us about two hundred men and dogs. The old chief, out of courtesy, accompanied me for a distance of about twelve miles, in order to see me fairly upon the road. Before he returned he gave orders to some of his men of war to see that I had proper attention, and the “hottest corners” reserved for me. I was very much struck by the enormous herds of game we saw upon these large plains or “veldts,” which extended as far as the eye could reach, without any trees being visible. It was something inconceivable. The whole plain appeared to be moving, so thickly was it covered with antelopes, zebras, quaggas, buffaloes, gnus, and, here and there, a small herd of giraffes. After a “trek” of about thirty miles we encamped for the night. The Kaffirs gathered together as much dry dung as we wanted, that being the only fuel obtainable in those parts. We then made up and lit about forty fires in a circle, and soon had our kettle boiling. We made some Kaffir tea from a plant which is a kind of mint, possessing a bitter flavour; the natives easily find it in the bush, so that it is not very difficult to obtain. I was not able to get a wink of sleep all that night, and I do not think the Kaffirs did any more than I, for between eleven and twelve o’clock the lions and hyenas began to make the most hideous noise, melancholy and doleful to a degree that was quite depressing to the spirits.

Our fires were surrounded by these animals at a very short distance, and they kept us company until day-break, when they disappeared. The largest lion I ever saw, a most splendid beast, was close to us all night. He appeared so hungry that he would have made very small bones of any one who should have fallen in his way, and a magnificent lioness was with him. After he had been there roaring for some time another lion

"Gave another roar,
And the first lion thought the last a bore."

Then the hottest combat ensued that I ever witnessed; it was so terrible that there could scarcely be said to be any enjoyment in the magnificent spectacle, for we were in imminent danger of our lives should either of them in their fury spring over the fires. The two brutes fought for the lioness, and the incredible activity of the smaller of the two was something awful. It leapt upon the back of the big one and both rolled over together, the fore quarter of the big lion being one mass of blood. I consulted with the Kaffirs as to what had better be done, and we decided upon firing assagais at them, keeping three guns in reserve in case of necessity. The pricks of the assagais made them more fierce towards each other, and for a few seconds they seemed positively riveted together. Meantime, as the fighting of these two brutes had driven all the other game away, we discharged a volley of musketry at random, which did

not seem to take effect. They still fought on, blood running from them as water from a pump. We loaded again and fired, this time with more precision, for we shot the small one dead. The other stood over his dead foe, defiantly lashing his tail backwards and forwards, for a considerable time, until at last being apparently tired of that amusement, and growing weaker by his wounds, he crawled off. We did not touch the dead one till the morning, as it was not considered prudent to venture outside our circle. At daybreak, however, notwithstanding that we were much fatigued with our night's excitement, we skinned the lion with great care, and then went in search of something for our own consumption. We were not long before we succeeded in bringing down a fine gnu to our assagais. The skin was taken off him in a surprisingly short time, and a fine rump-steak was cooked for myself, while my companions preferred having it, "not to put too fine a point on it," *rather* more under-done. "Tiffin" ended, the lion we had wounded the night before was the next thing to look after. He went towards a large tract of high grass and reeds, and there in the moist earth his footsteps were visible. We now kept a good look-out in case of a surprise, although it is needless to tell you that a Kaffir always does that, for these men are so much with wild animals that they become as watchful and wide awake as the beast of prey itself. Several hours elapsed before we came upon his trail, but when

we did so it did my heart good to see the wonderful eagerness and excitement of these fine fellows. They brandished their assagais, and those who had shields first held them down to their feet and then threw them up to their heads, in the most defiant and energetic manner possible.

A peculiar "hee hee" from the foremost Kaffir now told us that his majesty of the forest, hero of the plain, was in view, resting himself, but at some distance off. In another minute all was confusion. Two splendid shots were selected from our warriors in case he should spring upon us.

I did not join in this attack, but took it easily, anxious to watch the performance from the background. I gave up my gun to a fine old Kaffir, who begged permission to have a shot. Before we had proceeded much farther to our great surprise a large lioness made her appearance; she was, poor thing, heavy with cub, and stood for a few seconds contemplating her enemies. She was about to retire to the high reeds, as she evidently did not wish to show fight, but a shower of assagais rendered her furious, and the savage growl caused by pain and anger induced her wounded lord to join her. It does not often fall to the lot of the most fortunate hunter to witness so majestic a sight as this. Even the natives themselves seemed impressed with respect for the majesty of these brutes, and a general expression of admiration involuntarily burst from them. The lion

appeared to be severely injured by the struggle of the previous night; the lioness was bleeding profusely from her fresh wounds, but they appeared quite prepared to fight.

The attachment of the lion and lioness for each other is wonderful; and when the lioness is in cub she is more disposed to fight than the male. The Kaffirs began to be impatient for the attack, so two active men, who were apparently well versed in these matters, urged the dogs on to drive them out; it was, however, a good hour before the fight commenced, in consequence of the great extent of grass and high reeds. At last we saw the reeds begin to move, and with a fearful roar which made the very ground tremble, and would have caused the boldest heart an uncomfortable spasm or two, the lion sprang into the midst of the dogs. Several were straightway disabled, but the rest stuck to him like leeches. Kaffir dogs have no real courage until they are driven, like the rat, into a corner; once there they have the same peculiarity as the Kilkenny cats of killing and eating each other, or anything else they get hold of, to the last mouthful.

All was hubbub and confusion; the dogs barked furiously, and the Kaffirs, with a wild yell, showered a volley of assagais, and I let fly from my rifle two bullets which took effect; he was badly but not mortally wounded. The lioness now came up again and made at us with indomitable fury. Luckily we had had time to reload, and every Kaffir was ordered to take good

aim and fire simultaneously. This was done, a bullet succeeded in finding her heart, and she rolled over and died without a struggle. The male could not understand this, and the poor beast made an effort to get up to her, but he had lost so much blood, and the pain had rendered him so nearly *hors de combat* that he was scarcely able to crawl. His roar was still terrible, but grew weaker and weaker. The Kaffirs, with their wonted cruelty, liked to listen to his dying groans and to see him thus tortured; but I insisted on having him quickly despatched. They obeyed my orders, and he died like the king of beasts, as he is, faithful and bold to the last.

We encamped near this spot, and soon had large fires burning to keep off the wild beasts. During the night we were visited by packs of hyenas, which kept up a monotonous howling. In the morning at day-break we sighted a pair of ostriches, but not being at all inclined for great exertion that day, we did not pay them the attention they deserved, but merely proceeded to kill a few buck for our immediate consumption. While engaged in this manner, a couple of the Kaffirs came running to me in a very excited state, and one of them asked for the loan of my trousers. Surprised at nothing, I at once took them off, and lent them to him. He cut some long grass, and tied up the ends tightly round the ankles with the reeds; then both ran off as fast as they could, leaving me quite trouserless, and at a loss to know what the fellows



LAST MOMENTS OF THE LION.

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were about to do. Under the circumstances of the case, I let things take their course, and did not trouble myself any more about the matter. Some time afterwards the men returned, each carefully bearing up the trousers by taking hold of them by the outside seam, and not allowing the ends to touch the ground. They approached me with every demonstration of triumph and delight, and presented me with the contents, which, to my surprise, I found to be ostrich eggs. I put one of them into the embers of our fire, and cooked it for breakfast, first sawing off the top. The Kaffir, who ought to have been promoted to the kitchen of the Reform Club, directed me to keep perpetually stirring it with my wooden spoon until it simmered, when salt and a few other ingredients were added by his advice. I hardly ever ate a more excellent dish. Had I had milk, I should have made of it an admirable omelet. There was quite a fight among my followers for the other eggs; not, I may observe, for their stomach's sake, because they never eat eggs, as I have said before, but for the sake of the shells. They cut the tops off these, and took out all the yolk; after which, during their spare time, or whilst idly squatting round the fire, they amused themselves by elaborately engraving them. One was sculptured after the fashion of a flask I had, which they looked at and examined minutely before they set to work; and they fashioned another for me in a similar manner, which I found very useful as a drinking cup. I carried it at my

saddle-bow for a long time, until some rascal at D'Urban stole it from me. It seemed such wholesale destruction of these valuable eggs, that I would never afterwards give my consent to any others being taken.

I stopped about here for some time, letting the Kaffirs kill what buck they wanted. During my stay, three Dutch Boers passed us, but did not enter into conversation with me. I believe it was because I had so many Kaffirs with me: the two races are not fond of one another.

The gnu we found very plentiful, and it frequently gave us good sport. One day we went out upon a hunting expedition, and almost immediately came upon a herd of a dozen or more of these curious-looking animals. Their speed is astonishing; and as soon as we discovered them grazing at some distance in our front, the Kaffirs set off running in two directions, giving them as wide a berth as possible, in order to surround them without attracting their attention. As soon as they had succeeded in encircling them, the men gradually advanced, until the gnus noticed the stealthy natives creeping up on all sides. Upon this they began to hold up their great heads, and prepare to make a bolt of it; but it was now no easy matter, as the Kaffirs had taken advantage of their fright and confusion, and were already throwing their assagais amongst them. The effect was very strange; and we succeeded in killing four of them, the others managing

to get clear off. It is considered by the natives a very great achievement to slay these animals. The Kaffirs, as soon as they were killed, cut off the heads, and placed them on the top of their own. The blood trickled down their faces and bodies, and thus gave them a truly fiendish look. One fellow came up to me, and was much disappointed that I could not compliment him upon his appearance. While he was talking, a large quantity of flies, only to be compared in numbers to a swarm of bees, joined his own "family circle," unable to resist so tempting a bait.

In one of my wanderings in this wild country, I came upon an ostrich's nest, full of eggs. The old bird was sitting upon them, and would not get off for some time. She appeared to feel no fear, and this led me to suppose that she was not far from hatching. All her addled eggs she had ingeniously placed outside the nest; and the sun's heat falling directly upon them, had caused the rotten yolk to become hard. It was something like a hard-boiled egg, which would be the food of the young ones for the first few days of their lives. She had fifteen eggs chipped, and two in the nest hatched. In shape, I can compare the birds to nothing better than young monkeys; only that they were monkeys upon an immense scale. The nest was right out on the flat, without any protection. Ostriches are becoming scarce upon these large "veldts," and I have heard that there are ostrich farms doing a thriving trade, but I have never seen one. I secured a great

many feathers, and used to bake them in an old tin shako case I happened to have with me.

The climate was very delightful, and I at last gave myself up to the wind and my fate. Acting upon the principle that I could only be in one place at one time, I began to be indifferent to the future. I believe that individual freedom, which is a very different thing from political freedom, can never be realised to a greater extent than it was upon this occasion by me.

We found during our wanderings very large flocks of quail, which the natives caught in the early morning while the dew was upon their wings. These birds were flayed—that is, skin and feathers pulled off together, then split in halves, and put upon a gridiron—a primitive, and not ineffective mode of cooking them.

A few days after our adventure with the ostriches, after hunting and killing large quantities of buck and gnu, we came upon the cameleopard, or giraffe. There were five of them together, and it seemed to me a great cruelty to kill these beautiful creatures. They began to canter off as soon as they caught sight of us, a female with her calf at the head of them leading the way. A stern chase is a long one, but we determined upon having one at all hazards. A fine bull fell to my rifle, the skin of which proved a most useful article for cutting into rheims for yoking the oxen, as very long pieces can be obtained from it.

I frequently amused myself by boiling down the feet

of deer, which, in case of a famine, I thought would be a very satisfactory provision to have in reserve.

We continued upon these plains a length of time, killing an endless amount of large game; and I also paid a visit to Bloemfontein, a Dutch town, containing nothing at all worthy of notice. The trade appeared to consist of the hardest necessities of life, and made me feel quite melancholy; so much so, that I was very glad to get back into the "veldt" again. I managed, however, to make a few very necessary purchases, and write several letters. The marked rudeness and inquisitiveness of the settlers here was beyond anything I had seen, nor were they so generally hospitable as I found them in Natal. There were a few English in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein, who had become tired of Natal, and who had retired hither for a change. The general absence of wood in this country detracts from the picturesque nature of the scenery.

The Dutch are most anxious to have their children well-instructed; and I believe there were several well-educated young Englishmen who had undertaken to go into their families as tutors, at salaries of £50 a year, including their board and lodging; which sum was generally paid in cattle; the Boer, with an eye to self, objects to part with money if he can possibly avoid it. They tried to make out to me that they were invariably cheated by the English, a matter that I always considered to be a "boot on the other leg." The extreme indolence of the people here was

remarkable, but not surprising to me, as one day was so much like another that it was a marvel, to my restless spirit, how these people got through their lives at all. Many of them impressed me with the idea that they had the greatest possible abhorrence of soap and water. I remember upon one occasion mentioning to a Dutchman the peculiar filthiness of the people, to this he merely remarked, "Where there is dirt there is money!" a new comment on "filthy lucre." Upon entering their houses the first thing to be done is to admire the cat. This will delight the ladies of the household, who I believe considered themselves entitled to a kiss; and as it is the custom of the country, it is right to conform to it; they would probably be much disappointed if it were overlooked in the case of the young and handsome. They are most frugal in their mode of living, which consists chiefly of coffee, with ground mealies made into porridge.

In my opinion the Dutch Boer is little else than a white Kaffir. They are a gossiping, petty-minded people, but extremely patient in business, especially in all agricultural pursuits; and most of them profess to be very religious. They make large profits by their ivory, which they obtain from the far interior, whither they frequently make long "treks" to secure it. They generally go in threes, and stick closely together, taking good care not to let any one join them in these profitable expeditions. The great amount of labour required in bringing the ivory down to the coast takes

off a great deal of the profit ; and many of them hoard the ivory for years. While in this neighbourhood I saw a large herd of zebras, many of which were mares with their foals ; but there was no possible chance of getting a shot at them, as they were so exceedingly wild. We kept these animals in view for some days ; and I think I may here state that wherever zebras are seen in any numbers ostriches are tolerably certain to be found in the neighbourhood. It proved so upon this occasion, and we gave chase to one. The run lasted four hours, and then we only got near it by rounding and cutting off corners. I mounted a Kaffir upon a horse, who, after shooting three times, managed to wound it ; and he was so desperately impatient to pull the best feathers out that he plucked many of them before the bird was dead.

The speed of these birds, I think, is quite equal to that of the thorough-bred horse ; but if they were started together, to make a fair race of it, I fancy over a long course the horse, if in good condition, would win. The rule of the chase is, that as soon as an ostrich is viewed the horse is to be put at full speed ; but the bird is very difficult to hunt owing to its propensity for doubling. It keeps its wings in alternate motion with its feet, and, as the Kaffirs are not horsemen, they prefer to hunt them on foot. They told me that they frequently had to be chased for two or three days together, and that at length, by worrying and starving them out, they were enabled to approach sufficiently near to

throw the knob-kerrie. This is a sort of bludgeon, made from the middle of the ironwood-tree, and is so hard that one blow of it upon a man's head would prove fatal. They kill the ostrich with these weapons in order to prevent the blood from flowing, which would, of course, stain its beautiful plumage. As far as my experience goes, African feathers are better than those which the Indian tribes bring down to the towns of South America.

These chiefs wear plumes that the richest English peeress would be proud to possess; and I have been told that the best feathers never come to England at all.

One day I witnessed a fight between two buffaloes. The fury and violence with which they rushed at one another was something incredible, and it looked like two castles meeting. I wished devoutly that they would go on long enough to kill each other, or that they would give us time to get up to them within gunshot; for judging from the pounding that each received, I looked forward to getting a tender steak; but I was doomed to disappointment, for before the Kaffirs and myself had time to get up to them they made a bounding exit, and were soon lost to sight in the far depths of the "veldt."

All animals that I have ever killed in these regions seem to have fought at some period of their lives; either, as is very common, with their own species about a female, or on some private quarrel with some larger.

game. I judge this from always observing scars of old wounds.

While amongst the Basuto Kaffirs I went to a large dance, in which more than five hundred girls took part, adorned with necklaces, otherwise as naked as when they were born. For an hour before the appointed time of meeting the surrounding country appeared to be dotted all over with Kaffirs coming in every direction, ambling and brandishing their assagais and shields, all wearing their richest ostrich plumes, with their bodies as highly polished as any piece of mahogany. This ointment gave them a very refreshing appearance, although it detracted from the pleasure I might otherwise have felt in a closer proximity. This was the last Kaffir dance that I attended, and I need hardly say more than that everything was conducted in much the same way as I have already described. I thoroughly enjoyed myself, and entered heart and soul into the spirit of the affair, attired as a Kaffir, and consequently flattering myself not only that I was popular among them, but that I commanded considerable attention.

Often now, after a lapse of time, I think of the humour and originality of these wonderful people; and I question whether we have not quite as much to learn from them of the material virtues of Christianity as they can ever hope to learn from us.

Soon after this cheerful visit to Moshesh I determined upon leaving the country in which I had passed some

sad, some happy months. I made a rapid "trek" to D'Urban to catch the mail steamer for the Mauritius, and I was fortunate enough to arrive two days before it left. It would here, I think, be wearisome to relate the adventures which took place upon the journey; and give an undue importance to what I mean for a light account of a sportsman's travels among the natives of a partially-known colony. Many, too, were similar to those already narrated.

I shall always look back with pleasure to the time I passed with Moshesh and his tribe, for I was treated with more courtesy and hospitality than falls to the lot of most travellers, and I fully appreciate his kindness.

When I arrived at Port Louis, trouble and vexation of a private nature for a time prostrated me, and I believe I should have died had it not been for the great care taken of me by Dr. Stone, of the Civil Hospital, where I was laid up for three months. I take this opportunity of publicly recording the gratitude I feel for his unremitting attention.

THE END.

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